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Ladies and Officers of the United States Army;

OR,

# AMERICAN ARISTOCRACY.

A SKETCH OF THE

SOCIAL LIFE AND CHARACTER OF THE ARMY

BY

DUANE MERRITT GREENE,

LATE LIEUT. U. S. ARMY.

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Some things good, and some things ill, do seem,  
And neutral some \* \* \*.—DAVIES.

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CHICAGO:  
CENTRAL PUBLISHING COMPANY.

1886.

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## PREFACE.

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THE present volume comprises a brief survey of the social life of the United States Army, and is designed to controvert and correct the erroneous views prevalent respecting its character, and to give a glimpse of a world into which the eye of the civilian seldom penetrates. The Army is a little domain of its own, independent and isolated by its peculiar customs and discipline; an aristocracy by selection and the halo of tradition. Its interior is an unexplored region to the mass of the people, and it is not the Dorado of morality, honor and chivalry that many believe; the heart of a Sidney does not invariably beat under

the Army "blue." Grand men, whom no age nor country has surpassed, are to be found on its roll; and charming women, who would grace the court of royalty, adorn its social circles; but manly virtues and high moral worth are no oftener found in the Army than in civil life. The degree of excellence which citizens generally ascribe to the ladies and officers of the Army is not always justified by investigation. The exterior tends to mislead the superficial observer; but, under the eye of criticism, the illusion passes away, until that alone remains which is founded on truth. Human nature never fails to disclose itself and to gain the ascendancy over any mode of cover which may be adopted.

The author's Army experience is hallowed by pleasant associations, and it presents a panorama of friendships staunch and true—of comrades sharing the fatigue of the march, the danger of

battle, the pride of victory, and the terror of retreat, too vivid to be forgotten; and he trusts that the animadversions made in the following pages may not be attributed to aught but a desire to give a correct sketch of Army life as it came under his observation; also, that the reader will not infer that the examples given under the various topics are isolated cases. It was not deemed necessary to cite more than enough to illustrate the subject.

D. M. G.



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# PART FIRST.

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LADIES OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY.



## CHAPTER I.

### LADIES IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE PREJUDICE OF GOOD ORDER AND MILITARY DISCIPLINE.

“War’s a care for men.”

—MRS. BROWNING.

IT is claimed by a prominent faction of the day that the influence of woman would be beneficent in the affairs of government — would purify politics and elevate the standard of public morals — were she allowed to freely exercise her power. The potency of her influence in public matters is already sufficiently well established to warrant us in ignoring entirely the question of her equality with man.

Cleopatra led Mark Antony a willing slave from the presence of Cæsar's gathering hosts, which he might have conquered and gained a throne. Madame de Maintenon controlled the splendid monarchy of Louis XIV, and immortalized her name by cruelty and oppression. Through this brilliant king she ruled France and made the monarchs of Europe tremble in their capitals. To her was attributed the appointment of unskillful generals and weak-minded ministers, and the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which had secured religious freedom to the Protestants.

Woman's agency in civilizing and refining society is too patent to admit of discussion — a more graceful culture and purer morals spring up, like natural flowers, wherever her feet have trod. Illus-



trious examples prove her ability to fill exalted positions of trust, and to cope with great events; and that keenness of perception and intuitive sense of the fitness of things, which are peculiarly characteristic of woman, eminently qualify her for the office of adviser and friend. The frivolous conduct of the Egyptian queen is offset by the prudence and learning of the stately Elizabeth, whose able rule marks the golden age of England's history—hers the glory to cheer on her subjects to victory over an “Invincible Armada!” On the proud throne of France the Man of Destiny found his star in the ascendant so long as the good and wise Josephine was admitted to his councils.

And yet, with such renowned precedents before him—with all deference to

her capability as civilizer, ruler and counselor—the writer is constrained to hope that, should the time come when women have the ballot and all their so-called “rights,” their power may be limited in one branch of the public service, namely, the Army. Observation and experience have demonstrated to him that the presence of ladies in the Army is prejudicial to good order and military discipline. This statement may seem ungallant and too comprehensive, but the picture he proposes to give of Army life he thinks will sustain him in the assertion, and show that this already dominant power should not be increased, but rather limited and restrained.

In the armies of Europe there are restrictions upon the marriage of the officers, and the most rigid regulations are

prescribed for the government of their families when residing at Military Posts, as the presence of ladies is regarded as inimical to the interests of the service; and they are oftener found there as guests than as members of the garrison. The wife of an officer is very rarely dependent upon her husband for a home, nor would she sacrifice her wonted social position for a permanent residence in the Army. During the immobility of the armies, a large proportion of the married officers are allowed to spend much of the time with their families.

In our Army the enlisted men are restrained, but the officers marry at their option. However agreeable may be the presence of ladies, it is a noticeable fact that the lack of discipline is most conspicuous at stations where the number of

ladies is greatest. They monopolize the time of the bachelors as well as the time of their husbands, and, consequently, those little attentions which are indispensable to the welfare and comfort of the enlisted men are neglected. The married officer is more prone to shirk duty than the unmarried. The former, when detailed for service that involves personal danger, is surrounded by a weeping family—children begging their father to remain with them, and an affectionate wife appealing to the love of her husband, insisting upon his feigning sickness, or resorting to some other subterfuge to evade the order;—

“O thou, who art my sweetest spouse beside  
Come now and take me into pity! Stay  
I’ the town here with us! Do not make thy child  
An orphan, nor a widow thy poor wife!”—

and the husband does not always reply as did great Hector:

“Lady, for these things  
It is my part to care. And *I* fear most  
My Trojans, and their daughters, and their wives,  
Who through their long veils would glance scorn at  
me,  
If, coward-like, I shunned the open war.  
Nor doth my own soul prompt me to that end!”

Bachelors are free to act according to their sense of professional honor. To them, danger is an incentive to heroic deeds, as promotion sometimes follows, if they escape death. The married officer often fails even to visit the guard after midnight, when “Officer of the Day,” especially if the weather is stormy. His wife says, “Let the guard go to-night, dear”; and, through deference to her wishes, he remains in bed.

At Fort Hays, Kansas, the author heard a lady complain bitterly because her husband was detailed for duty that

would take him away from his station, and probably detain him several weeks. She remarked to some friends, "I think it's too bad! the Major is ordered to Santa Fé on court-martial duty, and may be gone till next spring, and I shall have to remain here alone! We have just completed the arrangement of our house, and adopted a programme for our winter's entertainment. I think they might send an *unmarried* officer!" Turning to her husband, she continued, "Dear, why don't you say you are sick and unable to go; the Doctor is a kind man, and I'm sure he will give you a certificate of disability? *I'll* talk to him!"

There is usually a harmonious feeling among the officers of Posts where there are no ladies. They exchange cordial greetings, indulge in little pleasantries of

conversation, and always part with a desire to meet again. Their social status is based upon intrinsic merit instead of the caprice of a giddy woman. If Congress were to enact a law requiring the examination of ladies who propose to make a home in the Army, as to their intellectual qualifications and general fitness, and defining their position and obligations when residing within the military jurisdiction, the same happy condition might prevail throughout the Army. In the absence of such a measure, an approximate degree of unanimity in social matters might obtain, if the married and the unmarried officers were not permitted to serve together when the former have their wives with them. This would save the bachelors from persecution, equalize duty, and promote the interests of those

who desire to study something besides flirtations. However desirable such an innovation might be, it is impracticable.

A remarkable case of breach of discipline, through the influence of a woman, occurred in the Department of the Pacific. The officer was a surgeon, stationed in San Francisco, California, where his family had the *entre* to the best society. In the course of events, the Indians became troublesome in the northern part of that State. Anticipating a protracted campaign, the Department Commander reinforced the troops in the hostile district with men from the Presidio of San Francisco, and it fell to the lot of the surgeon to go with them. Upon receipt of the order, he hastened to inform his wife.

“What an outrage!” she exclaimed to some visitors. “Think of it! The Doc-



tor has been ordered to the North Coast to fight Indians! I really believe it is done to persecute me, and he shall not go one step!"

Actuated by a sense of duty, the Doctor endeavored to reconcile himself to his fate, and informed the indignant lady that the order was imperative and could not be evaded, to which she made the following reply:

"That proposition is an admission of weakness, and shows a lack of manliness. Indomitable will and pluck to back it are qualities I admire in a man. Show the General that you have rights as well as he, and that he cannot make a convenience of you every time troops are sent after Indians. A surgeon is needed here, and why don't he allow *you* to remain? Why don't he send Doctor —;

he has no family and no citizen practice, and wouldn't be missed? Let the steamer sail without you."

"But, my dear, I'll get into trouble," replied the vacillating Doctor.

"Never mind," responded the indefatigable wife, "even if you are tried for it, you will get off with a slight reprimand, and in the meantime you can have the comforts of home and the pleasures of society, and probably the war will be ended before your trial takes place."

He acted in accordance with her advice, and the steamer sailed without him; and, there being but two steamers per month from San Francisco to the North Coast, another opportunity for transportation could not be had in less than two weeks. When it was discovered at Department Headquarters that the Doctor

had not complied with his order, and, failing to give a satisfactory explanation, he was put in arrest. When "steamer day" came again he was released and directed to proceed to Fort Humboldt and report to the District Commander for assignment to duty, and the Provost Marshal was instructed to see that he was on board the ship when she was ready to sail. About an hour before the time fixed for the vessel's departure the Marshal called to ascertain whether he intended to go. Not knowing that this officer was addressing him officially, the Doctor said he should not obey the order. The Marshal then informed him of his instructions, but he refused positively to go, saying, "I'll resign first."

During this interview the Doctor was stimulated by the unwise counsel of his

wife, who repeatedly assured him that nothing serious would come of the matter. The Marshal withdrew from the scene, and in a short time afterward a guard, consisting of a lieutenant, a sergeant and four privates, confronted the mutinous Doctor. After he had reiterated his determination not to go, the men were directed to seize and conduct him to the steamer, which they did, regardless of the protestations of his infuriated wife. Seeing the utter hopelessness of her case, she accepted the situation and hastened to prepare herself for the voyage with her husband, meanwhile consoling him with the suggestion that she would endeavor to get him assigned to duty at District Headquarters, which, by her subtle influence, she accomplished. She afterward boasted of it, and said

that any other officer would have been tried for "disobedience of orders," but that *she* could keep *her* husband out of trouble, and that so long as she had that power, she would not permit him to be used as a target for a band of marauding savages. ¶

This case is related in detail to demonstrate the fact that the ladies of the Army do not regard military duty as paramount to domestic felicity.

The *morale* of the Army is seriously depreciated by the influence of women. A lady of fine social qualities, whose husband may be an irredeemable drunkard, a disgrace to the Army, and a fraud on mankind, insures his commission by the adroit manipulation of her admirers. If he stands condemned before a court-martial, she may be the means of his

salvation. Her artfully-planned supplications seldom fail to excite sympathy for herself, and to restore her profligate lord to all the dignity of his former rank and position. Thus the Nation, as well as the Army, feels her power.

Junior officers frequently suffer injustice from the whimsical arbitration of their superiors, and to this is sometimes added persecution by a vindictive woman. An instance may be cited of an officer stationed at Fort Riley, Kansas, who had received an order from the Post Commander, granting him seven days' leave of absence, with permission to apply at Department Headquarters for an extension of twenty days. The leave had been solicited by the officer, and the order granting it specified no conditions, but was made in the usual form. He

expressed his intention to spend the leave in St. Louis, and of applying from that point for the extension. The night before his intended departure he called on several officers to bid them "good-bye," and meeting agreeable people, time passed unnoted until it was too late to call on the Commanding Officer and the Adjutant. Before guard-mount the following morning these two gentlemen had been informed that the Lieutenant had spent the previous evening in paying his parting respects to people of the garrison. The wife of the Adjutant was furious in her denunciation of the officer, saying that his conduct was a palpable insult to her,—that he had ignored those upon whom he should call first,—and directed her husband to ask the Commanding Officer to revoke the order giv-

ing the leave. He obeyed the mandate, and the Commandant dispatched his "orderly" to the railway station, with an order for the Lieutenant to report at his office immediately. When the latter presented himself, the offended dignitary assumed a very pompous manner and insolently directed him to make application for the extension of his leave from that Post, and to remain there until a reply was received. Before reaching his quarters the Lieutenant met a party of gentlemen, of whom he had taken leave the night before, who inquired the cause of delay. He could not tell them; but the Adjutant, happening along just then, stated that, "had the Lieutenant called upon the Commanding Officer and the Adjutant, he might have gone when he desired."



## CHAPTER II.

### CASTE — STAFF AND LINE.

“Order is Heaven’s first law; and this confessed,  
Some are, and must be, greater than the rest.”

—POPE.

THERE is more caste distinction among the ladies of the Army than among its officers. At Posts where there are many ladies, the garrison is invariably divided into caste and “affinity” cliques. It is a common thing for a lady to carry the rank of her husband into the social circle, barely recognizing, in the most formal way, the wife of an officer of lower rank. At Department Headquarters Posts, the parallels of distinction are

more plainly marked — Staff ladies not fraternizing generally with the ladies of the Line. At all times General A meets Captain B in an affable and cordial manner, regardless of rank. But when *Mrs.* General A meets *Mrs.* Captain B, she assumes an air of superiority which is incompatible with her intellectual accomplishments. *Mrs.* Captain B realizes that *Mrs.* General A is her inferior in everything that distinguishes a lady, but is too polite to show that she notices her pomposity, and charitably covers it with the veil of submission. If an officer happens to call upon a lady below the rank of *Mrs.* General A before he has called upon *her*, he can never heal the breach. General A is directed to place the offender on disagreeable duty, and thus she is avenged.

When people are exalted in their own

estimation by descent from an illustrious ancestry, and maintain their heritage by nobility of character, we are willing to admit that there is a reasonableness in their pride, and they are elevated in our eyes by the conditions which give them eminence in their own ; but when people who come from the lowly walks of life, without even the prestige of distinguished ancestry — whose blood is so intricately amalgamated with the various nations of the earth that it would be difficult to trace it — and by a mysterious freak of fortune attain to a position among cultured people, it would be commendable in them to cultivate a modest reserve, rather than to attempt to codify rules for the social government of their superiors.

The most discordant garrisons are those comprising the greatest number of

ladies. Jealousies and imaginary slights produce much of the unpleasantness. For instance, a lady from a distant Post was visiting an officer's family at Fort Riley, Kansas, and a lady of the garrison, desiring to extend her hospitality to the fair visitor, gave a dinner party, inviting the stranger and a few of her most intimate friends. Having packed away part of her dishes, preparatory to a change of station, she called on a neighbor lady to borrow some for the occasion. She explained the circumstances and expressed regret that limited facilities prevented the invitation of her and others, but the neighbor considered herself grossly slighted, and has ever since relentlessly persecuted the innocent offender.

An unmarried officer, domestic in his habits, who seldom calls on the ladies,

and spends much time in his quarters, is generally treated with marked indifference. If he should be so unfortunate as to find but one congenial lady at his Post, and show more attention to her than to the others, they manifest their displeasure by omitting to invite him to participate in their social entertainments. The gentleman, unconscious of giving offense, makes inquiry of his brother officers, and is informed that Mrs. A says he never called upon her but once, and then not until after he had visited all the others. Another lady states that he has not yet called upon her, and that if he did so at this late day she should consider it a cold compliance with custom rather than a desire to cultivate her acquaintance, and therefore not feel honored.



## CHAPTER III.

### DEGENERACY OF ARMY SOCIETY — POSSIBILITIES OF AMERICAN CIVILIZATION.

“Where are the Marys, and Anns, and Elizas,  
Loving and lovely of yore?”

—OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

“America! Freedom’s blest abode!

Where nothing in the civil code

Prescribes a qualification!

Jehu for a sword his whip may resign —

Bridget may hold stock in a silver mine;

Jehus and Bridgets in splendor may shine

In the highest station!”

A GREAT number of ladies have married into the Army since the Rebellion who do not belong to that well-bred class whose education and polish elevated and refined its society prior to that event.

Many of the modern Army ladies were simple, artless girls before they sought homes in the "tented field," but the sudden transition from a sphere wherein they met the stern realities of life with brain and muscle, to one where life seems naught but sunny years, has completely changed their disposition. They left behind

"The hopes and fears of girlhood years."

The metamorphosis is probably attributable to the prospect of the life-long situation of their husbands. They are inflated with aristocratic ideas, to which they had previously been utter strangers. Their thoughts do not range beyond the shores of to-day, nor do they manifest a desire for anything but "brass buttons," costly dresses, fine dinners, and flirtations



with bachelors. There are those among them who make themselves conspicuous on all occasions by their glibness of tongue, without regard to the rules of grammar or the laws of acoustics. Wealth and position do not excuse the lack of culture, but only tend to make it a reproach. Neither can tinsel, nor the "pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war," supply the place of intellectual attainments and refined manners.

Unprecedented examples of the absence of maternal affection are common in the Army. There are affluent mothers of large families who are so imbued with a love of frivolous gayeties that they deprive themselves and their children of the advantages of civilization, and eke out an uncertain and miserable existence at remote and isolated Posts on the frontier,

without society, wasting away life in prison-like solitude, too selfish to leave the Army long enough to superintend the primary instruction of their children, or to have them properly matriculated in an educational institution.

Army ladies, as a rule, do not consider themselves adapted for the world which others inhabit, and hold it to be a common right to military people to live only within the circle of the Army. It is no doubt due in a great measure to this spirit that Army society is so exclusive with respect to civilians.

A bright lady correspondent of an Illinois journal, commenting upon the possibilities of American civilization — which permit one's own servant to become too grand a lady to recognize her former mistress — cites a case that came under her

personal observation on the occasion of General Grant's reception in Chicago. Desirous of obtaining a good view of the hero, she took a position near the elevator in the hotel where he was quartered, that her curiosity might be gratified. She was soon rewarded by the passage, within a foot or two of her, of the honored guest of the evening, with his family, draped richly but plainly in evening costumes, on their way to the reception. She says :

“ Following immediately in their wake came a being, two beings, in fact, so resplendent that wearied eyes protested against so much dazzle, and shut perforce as when gazing on the sun at noontide. Who can these be — these birds of plumage gay? Stragglers, doubtless, from that flock of birds of paradise which had just taken flight. But no, the Grants, in all their glory, were not attired like one of these. The poet's words came to my mind, ‘ Gay, guiltless pair, what seek ye from the fields of

heaven? ' but, musing thus, a light dawned on me — the light of other days. This gorgeous creature was once a *plain, domestic fowl*, scratching for daily bread in the *de mesne* of the writer hereof. The queenly being, whose robes of velvet brushed so closely the plain cashmere of her former mistress, is now the wife of a Captain in the Army, her cavalier on the present occasion."

But let us away from Chicago and its gayeties, and peep into a ball-room at a Military Post in Kansas. Who is that majestic lady, richly clad, and decked with costly jewels, sweeping through the mazy dance, her sparkling eyes and glossy hair blending harmoniously with the dazzling brightness of the chandelier, and her face beaming with a winsome smile? She approaches, and her rich Irish brogue greets our ears as we recognize a former laundress and now a Captain's wife! For the sake of romance, what a pity she

could not leave the evidence of her nationality in the wash-tub when she last performed the duties of her office! Perhaps no one regrets this more than she, for sometimes she drowns the memory of her origin in a "wee dhrap of the cra-thur!"

Now, to a Post still farther west. A lady and a gentleman are crossing the parade ground, evidently a newly married couple in the first stage of their honeymoon. Notwithstanding it is noonday, she holds one of his hands, swinging it to and fro, as they slowly advance, and many faces are peering from barrack windows and doors with an eagerness which suggests that they are reminded of the girl they left behind them. But, hold! We are mistaken! It is only a little flirtation! The lady is the wife of

the Post Commander, and the officer is a bachelor! Her rudeness is no doubt due to a lack of early training and ignorance of the usages of polite society, rather than to conscious impropriety.

## CHAPTER IV.

### MARRYING FOR POSITION.

“Maidens, like moths, are ever caught by glare.”  
—BYRON.

“Come sit thee down upon this flowery bed,  
While I thy amiable cheeks do coy,  
And stick musk-roses in thy sleek, smooth head,  
And kiss thy fair, large ears, my gentle joy.”  
—MIDSUMMER NIGHT’S DREAM.

THE Army seems to have a peculiar fascination for women. Gaudy uniforms excite the admiration of many to such a blinding degree that they are incompetent to analyze the character of the persons who animate them. We recall the story of the German Professor who paced Monmouth street, London,

worshiping the old clothes in the Jews' shops, thinking that as they were purified from the grossness, the sin and the hypocrisy they contained when worn by men, he could now indulge in his devotions without fear of deceiving himself or others. If the sentiment of the ladies were as highly ideal as that of the Professor, and their reverence, like his, confined to the "shells or outer husks of the body," their future happiness, in many cases, would be greatly enhanced. The luster of the buttons has a charming influence, like the light of a serpent's eye. Highly educated and refined young ladies marry officers with whom, as civilians, they would never come in contact. There may be something noble and patriotic in a fair lady giving herself to a brave and chivalrous man, when all



things are equal; but it is painfully degrading for ladies of refinement, amply endowed with the treasures of this world, to become the wives of foreigners of no culture—men who enlisted as private soldiers for occupation, and in the nation's emergency were commissioned, but who still reek with the odor of the ranks, and some of them addicted to excesses seldom met with in the darkest shades of a great city—revels vile enough to make midnight blush and hell ashamed; foreigners who, even now, speak poor, broken English, and in civil life would be classed with the section hands of a railroad.

“To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds  
Timorous.”

Such officers spend their days in the most narrow and limited situation of life,

and have no immediate influence except on a small circle of congenial friends. Every one of this class is not so fortunate as to have a wife so eminently his superior. Some marry within their own sphere and get women who may have done your washing or scrubbed your floors in days gone by, but who look down with pitying eyes upon you now. Rank is their controlling social power, as well as the standard of their social position. They take no pleasure in books, needlework, or anything that would divert them from schemes of riotous living; but it must not be inferred from this that they are Epicurean in their tastes. However, there are not a sufficient number of this class to materially affect the common status.

The frequent great disparity in age

leads one to suspect that position, rather than affection, was the controlling motive on the part of the ladies in these ill-sorted unions. "Cupid's flower" could hardly make "poor females" so mad as these outside of a play. When we see a fair young wife carefully investing her aged and uncongenial husband's monthly stipend, with a view to accumulation, is it altogether base in us to suspect that she is looking forward to a day when

"No sound can awake him to glory again,"

and she will be free to make a selection more compatible with her tastes, or, perhaps, marry the lover of her youth?



## CHAPTER V.

### WHERE THE PUBLIC MONEY GOES.

“Where lies the power, there let the blame lie, too.”

THE pressure of social requirements causes much of the money appropriated by Congress for the support of the Army to be squandered for levees and entertainments, and other purposes not anticipated in the estimates. The demands of the ladies, to keep the social machinery in motion, take precedence of all others.

A party and “hop,” given at a Post on the frontier, was attended by officers whose stations were hundreds of miles

distant. They were summoned ostensibly on official business, so that their transportation and hotel bills, *both ways*, should be paid by the United States. This was done at the instigation of the Department Commander's wife, seconded by other ladies of the garrison, in order to insure the attendance of a large number of gentlemen. Their efforts brought together thirty-five officers and twenty-three ladies. This, too, at a time when the appropriations for the Army were deficient several hundreds of thousands of dollars, and when the public animals serving in that Territory were worked hard in the field on a starvation allowance of forage, *viz: four pounds of grain per day* for cavalry horses, and *three pounds* for mules. The following extract, corroborating this statement, is taken

from an official letter addressed to the Chief Quartermaster of the Department by a Post Quartermaster, asking for an increase of forage for the public animals at his station :

“According to existing orders, scouting must be done by the troops of this Command, and, to enable them to do it, the animals ought to receive at least two-thirds of the quantity of hay allowed by law, and three-fourths of the allowance of grain. Four pounds of grain per day for horses so poor and jaded, and worked hard, are insufficient.”

Large sums of money are expended for constructing and altering buildings to make them conform to the ideas of affectedly-fastidious ladies. This source of expenditure is of greater magnitude than may be inferred from the mere mention of the fact. It sometimes comprises the changing of plans and specifications for new buildings after they have

been approved by the Secretary of War. All the quarters at Fort Hays, Kansas, were not constructed according to the "approved" plans. An officer was once detailed to furnish the Quartermaster-General drawings showing the ground-plan, front elevation, and a vertical section of the buildings of that Post, and when the first one was completed the Commanding Officer examined it and said, "You must not make such pretty pictures! The Quartermaster-General will think our houses are too fine for the Plains, and will blow us up for extravagance!" The drawings were accurate likenesses, having been made from actual measurement drawn to scale, and the Commandant need not have feared inspection if he had not allowed the modifications and alterations which were sug-



gested by the ladies who expected to occupy the houses.

The beauty and chivalry of that Post, like the fraternity elsewhere, were desirous of having a suitable place to meet

“To chase the glowing hours with flying feet;”

but as the Terpsichorean art was not prescribed by the Army Regulations, no appropriation could be properly solicited or made for the construction of a dance-hall. Lack of funds, however, was no obstacle to the combined ingenuity of that garrison. A bright lady present alluded to the fact that that Post had a Chaplain, but no chapel, and that Fort Harker, Kansas, had been abandoned, and suggested that application be made to the War Department for permission to remove a house from the latter Post to

Fort Hays for a chapel. The officers adopted this philanthropic lady's plan, and immediately made application in accordance therewith. The Hon. Secretary of War was much pleased with the christian spirit manifested by the people of Fort Hays in thus desiring to do something for the redemption of man from his lamentable and fallen condition. They could not reach his heart so readily with any other appeal. Feeling that he, too, might aid in ameliorating the condition of human souls and promote Christianity, by furnishing the means through which the gospel might reach the ears of thousands of weary pilgrims, he was extremely happy to grant their request, believing that,

"With some regard to what is just and right  
They'll lead their lives."

After his approval was obtained, workmen were sent to Fort Harker to take down a barrack building one hundred and five feet in length, which was shipped to Fort Hays, at great expense, where it was reconstructed on a new plan. Twenty-five feet were partitioned off for the worship of the Lord, and the remaining eighty feet constituted a room for dancing, theatrical and other amusements. The Post Council of Administration then appropriated money from the Post Fund to furnish the Chapel; and, as the entire building was known and designated as "The Chapel," it was not considered a misapplication of funds to furnish both rooms, notwithstanding the Post Fund is made from the proceeds of the sale of flour withheld from the soldiers' rations. A few cheap, unpainted benches, such as

are used in country school-houses, and a pulpit about the size and shape of a beehive, comprised the furniture of the room set apart for divine worship. The other room was more elaborately furnished. On the end adjoining the Chapel was a stage that would have done credit to a first-class minstrel hall, having footlights, drop-curtain, wings, scenery, and all the appliances necessary for its purpose. Pretty chandeliers lighted this room, and flags, guidons and mottoes decorated its ceiling and walls. A door opened onto the stage, which made the Chapel convenient for a green-room on occasions of theatrical entertainments, and for a cloak-room when "hops" were given; and it is thought that the ladies had this in view when they suggested the plan of construction.

The only official protest the author ever heard expressed against the use of the Post Fund for anything the ladies desired was that of a grouty old cavalryman, whose wrinkled front "grim-visaged war" had not smoothed. He was a member of a Council of Administration when a colleague proposed to make an appropriation for the purchase of an organ for the above Chapel. When this proposition was made, the angry Captain sprang to his feet and said:

"I protest against the expenditure of the Post Fund for any such nonsense. My men are now half starved to support a band they seldom hear, and I will not consent to the purchase of an organ for the Sunday entertainment of the non-combatants. I demand more bread and less music for my men!"



## CHAPTER VI.

### THE POWER BEHIND THE THRONE.

“Mars deposed, and arms to gowns made yield.”

—DRYDEN.

THE ladies do not only manipulate the social affairs of the Army, but they are the power behind the throne which directs the administration of much of the official business. There is always an Egeria to dictate, but, not being of celestial origin, her oracles are not infallible. The garrison of Headquarters Posts is selected by the wife of the Commanding Officer, when the number of troops required is less than a regiment. She designates the companies whose officers

are the most agreeable to her. Gentlemen who are so unfortunate as to incur her displeasure are put upon detached service that will take them away from the Post; or, their company is exchanged for one whose officers are more congenial to her, and who are willing to bend the supple knee that "thrift may follow fawning." If the commander be a widower or bachelor, the selection is made by the lady whose favorite he is for the time being, as gallantry forbids that he should choose a garrison objectionable in any degree to one who is so preëminently correct in her estimate of intellectual power and refinement, and so capable of selecting a society adapted to all the ends of elegant intercourse. He is simply her executive, and through him she persecutes with an excess of onerous and unpleasant duties all offi-



cers who are unwilling to "bow and sue for grace."

At a station in one of the Territories, the Commandant, in the presence of his wife, directed his Adjutant to detail an officer and twenty men for service in the field, and, after receiving a synopsis of the duties required of the party, the Adjutant started for his office to issue the necessary order, when the lady said to him, "Put Lieut. — on that detail — I want to get him away from the Post; and if he don't get killed, perhaps he will be more respectful when he returns." Soon afterward, the Adjutant ascertained that this was a measure for revenge; that a day or two previous she was outwitted by the Lieutenant in vulgar repartee.

Even a laundress has been known to have sufficient influence to retain a com-

pany at its station nearly all of one summer, though the Post Commander had orders from Department Headquarters to alternate it with another company in the performance of a specific duty. She had formerly been a trusted servant in his family, thus obtaining a prestige that insured any favor she might solicit. Her influence was used in this instance to keep her husband, who was First Sergeant of the troop, out of the field. When the Captain of the favored company was asked how he managed to remain in camp, he replied, with a knowing wink, "Every Captain hasn't a laundress at Headquarters."

## CHAPTER VII.

### INTEMPERANCE.

“ Hey down derry,  
We’ll drink and be merry,  
In spite of Mahomet’s law.”

**I**T is incomprehensibly strange that so many ladies yield to the demoralizing influences of the Army without any apparent compunctions, and really seem to covet the attention of profligate sons of Mars, who, in civil life, would be pronounced fit subjects for an inebriate asylum. They frequently bestow their smiles and approving glances upon the débauchés who show the least regard for the proprieties of refined society, and

even participate in the Bacchanalian revels so common at Military Posts, lending their voices to swell the chorus of "Benny Havens, oh!" Plaudit and approbation from so exalted a source have an irresistible influence upon the young officer fresh from the Academy, and he soon abandons those habits of morality which were acquired by years of rigid discipline.

It is customary for Army ladies to use stimulants, but excesses are exceptional. When one of them does cross the Rubicon, it is for a good time generally. Some of these convivialities are enjoyed by gentlemen and ladies together, in a quiet way, as an episode to a dinner, or as a sort of interlude to a card party. There are also informal occasions, which are often boisterous, as when a member of a garrison

is about to depart on a protracted "leave," or for permanent absence. For instance, we recall the leave-taking of a Post Commander stationed in one of the Territories. The ladies and officers of the Post assembled at his quarters to pay their parting respects to him and his wife. It was the unanimous desire to give them a good send-off, and in order to make it more enthusiastic, the host himself provided a liberal supply of wine and other beverages. After several songs had been sung, and toasts given and responded to, the guests joined in an aboriginal *pas de deux*, called "War Dance," which would have done credit to an Apache tiswin party. They kept time to their hideous chant by spasmodic jerks of their bodies, as they hopped around the room in a circle, alternating the foot every hop. The di-

sheveled hair, flushed cheeks, drooping eyelids, and high-stepping of the ladies, were the first visible effects of the wine. When the celebration had reached its zenith, the hostess, who had been over-zealous in her efforts to make this a memorable event, sank ungracefully into a shapeless mass upon a lounge, her spinal column having failed to perform its function.

“ Her look exceeded her figure.”

Though her physical anatomy had succumbed, she still had partial control of her mental faculties, and being actuated by the same spirit of hospitality she had manifested throughout the occasion, she turned her head so as to bring the eye which was the least oblivious to bear upon the party, which she scanned to ascertain if all were helped, as they were

about to drink ; and seeing that every one had a glass in hand except the Adjutant, she directed her husband, who was almost helplessly drunk, to wait upon that officer. While the others were drinking, she observed that the Adjutant placed his glass upon the mantel-piece without tasting its contents. This she construed into an act of disrespect, and, becoming exasperated almost beyond control, her language and manner would have intimidated a man of less nerve.

In civilian circles there are sometimes found ladies who drink to excess, but prefer to be exclusive and indulge their bibulous propensities without company. The Army has no immunity from the evils which afflict civilian society, and therefore has its proportional share of that class of inebriates. Two examples

may be mentioned of ladies who aim to be very exclusive on the occasions of their dissipation, but sometimes lose control of themselves and gain notorious publicity. One, a cultivated lady of high social standing, is preëminently dignified and fastidious when under the influence of liquor, and the peculiarity which marks her case is a mania for visiting restaurants, where she can have her brandy and food served together. The other is a woman of no culture, and her case may be given more in detail, as showing the effect of intoxicants on a sanguine temperament. She once became intoxicated and visited several persons with whom she was displeased, threatened them with annihilation, and used profane and blasphemous language on the parade ground, where she was seen and heard



by the officers and the enlisted men of the entire command. She has since broken the monotony of several Posts by similar crusades. Alcohol has stifled her sense of shame, and, as the ocean wave washes away idle tracings in the sands of the shore, so intemperance has obliterated all characteristics of true womanhood.

It has been a common thing for the ladies of a Post in Kansas to accompany their husbands to the trader's store to play billiards and imbibe wine and beer. This, too, in a room separated only by a thin partition from the one provided for the enlisted men. The partition does not extend to the ceiling, and over the top of it comes the vilest billingsgate from the mouths of drunken men of the lowest type. Frequenting

this saloon has been considered, until recently, a privilege of the officers only. The ladies claim that they made the innovation in self-defense, as their husbands spent most of their time there; and that, as the Constitution of the United States regards the pursuit of happiness as much the prerogative of women as of men, they will vindicate their rights at the trader's bar rather than at the "caudle." This practice also prevails at some Posts in the Territories, but the billiard-room is usually more remote from the common bar-room.

In the higher walks of civilian society, do ladies accompany their husbands to billiard and liquor saloons? Such an act would entail reproach upon them individually; but a particular society, like

the Army, is affected collectively by the questionable practices of a few.

The ladies of the Army have a wide field for the exercise of beneficent influence, and if those whose husbands rank high would eschew wine on all occasions, and ignore all persons addicted to its use, their example would be followed by the wives of subordinates as a matter of policy, and the evil of intemperance would soon disappear from the Army. The true excellence and importance of ladies who display themselves morally and intellectually may be seen in the great influence which they exert on the character of the immediate circle in which they move.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### FREEDOM OF MANNERS.

“Free thought that scorns control.”

—TRUMBULL.

THERE is a freedom of manners among the ladies of the Army that does not obtain in the best civilian society. This may be attributed to their exclusive mode of life, and to the common belief that the officers are all Chevalier Bayards. This is, in some respects, a pleasant feature of Army life. Married ladies may accept costly presents and receive little attentions and visits from agreeable bachelors without provoking the jealousy of their husbands or offending the gen-

eral sense of propriety. It is a recognized privilege of an Army lady to call upon any officer for a favor in the absence of her husband. The wife of an officer of highest rank, accompanied by a lady friend, stops her carriage in front of his Headquarters, and, perceiving that the sidewalks are icy and slippery, asks a gentleman, who has just emerged from the doorway, to assist them in alighting. She being rather portly, and the gentleman small, and an invalid at the time, the undertaking involved more than ordinary courage. They went slipping and sliding at the imminent peril of both, and, notwithstanding the preponderance of rank, and the smiling faces at the windows above them, he performed the service to the satisfaction of all concerned. The gentleman was unknown at the time to

the distinguished lady who made the request, but, when thanking him for the service he had rendered, she said that, *seeing he was an officer of the Army, she felt at liberty to call upon him.*

This license is often abused, the freedom of conduct evincing a lack of that thought which characterizes propriety, and which is never met with among cultivated civilians. Whatever may be the merit of Army ladies in other respects, there is often a painful absence of that delicate bloom of tenderness and refinement which mark the true woman in all the varied circumstances of life. Perversion of manners from their wonted simplicity stamps Army society with a peculiarity seldom found among people who assume to have reached the acme of social attainment. Now and then some

circumstance or other irresistibly recalls our attention to this point. A very accomplished and highly connected lady, with French ditties on her tongue and music in her fingers, once visited a Military Post in Kansas and made such a brilliant display of her talents that she turned the heads of half a dozen gentlemen, old and young, who were simultaneously inspired with a desire to possess this bird of sweet song. A lively rivalry ensued, which she terminated by giving her hand to the one whose position would afford her the greatest latitude to gratify a penchant for parading her accomplishments. The vicissitudes of Army life soon afterward scattered the garrison to different parts of the frontier, taking this lady to a remote Post. About two years afterward she returned to the scene of her conquest



on a visit, where she met one of her former admirers, who was again stationed there. The accommodations of her hostess were somewhat limited, and, upon the arrival of other guests, she feigned sickness, and was tendered the hospitality of the other ladies of the Post, but persistently declined their offers and accepted a room in the quarters of the admirer alluded to, who was still a bachelor. The Post Surgeon, who was a gentleman of the highest integrity, was then sent for, and the lady's perfectly healthy condition revealed to him the subterfuge, to which he declined to become a party, and refused to treat her. However, she did not suffer for attention. Meals were sent to her from the Officers' Mess, and the bachelor in whose care she had placed herself was employed night and day in

the preparation of beef tea and tonic decoctions. Here she held her little court, all the bachelors and some of the married gentlemen nightly gathering at her bedside, smoking and drinking, and entertaining her with songs. Madame de Staël, surrounded by the most distinguished men of her time, discussing literature, politics and philosophy, was not happier than this woman, who exclaimed, on one of these occasions, "I'm in my glory now!" Her husband, hearing of her "indisposition," came and took her back to his station. As soon as she boarded the train, early in the afternoon, she asked to have her berth prepared, so that she could lie down. There was a bachelor officer on the train, destined for the same Post, who happened to occupy the adjoining section. While reclining upon

her bed, she called him to her and requested him to remove her boot and ascertain if there was not a sand-burr in it, or sticking to her stocking, as something was pricking her foot. [The parade-ground of the Post she had just left was covered with grass which bore a small burr, about which the ladies had frequently complained because they adhered to their skirts and stockings, and sometimes even got into their boots.] Two perfect specimens of the genus Old Maid occupied the section opposite this lady, and as her manners were quite new and strange to them, they gazed at her with inquisitive and undivided attention from the moment she entered the car. Their demure faces grew long and bore an expression of horror when she asked the officer to remove her boot and look

for the sand-burr. They looked on with "sad but curious view" until the report of the search was rendered, when they directed the porter to prepare their bed immediately. When it was ready, they disappeared behind the curtain as if making their exit from impending danger. It is needless to add that, after diligent search, the offending burr was not found, but the little foot and neatly turned ankle were sufficiently admired to alleviate her pain.

## CHAPTER IX.

### AMUSEMENTS;— DRESS.

“By sports like these are all their cares beguiled.”

—GOLDSMITH.

“Is it not to clothes that most men do reverence?”

—SARTOR RESARTUS.

THE contingencies of Army life — parting agreeable acquaintances and sundering the ties of friendship — separating loved ones for a season, and often forever — might lead the uninformed to think that it is enshrouded in perpetual gloom ; that ladies, whose lives are frequently imperiled by the raids of savages while their husbands are engaged in mortal combat on distant fields, would

be sad, melancholy and prayerful. On the contrary, they are peculiarly gay and light-hearted, taking advantage of every opportunity for enjoyment, regarding all occasions and circumstances as favorable for

“Sport that wrinkled care derides.”

They have a happy faculty for reconciling the most chaotic mixture of maternal and domestic duties, and blending them in perfect harmony with anything that is frolicsome. Their creed is,

“A merry heart goes all the day,  
Your sad tires in a mile-a.”

The writer once arrived at a Post and learned that the officers and ladies were holding a picnic at a point about five miles distant. He proceeded to the place, and, finding the party engaged in dancing, went into the shade of a friendly

tree to rest and enjoy the happy scene before him. Perceiving a small bundle, apparently ladies' wraps, in a convenient location, he was about to drop his weary body upon it, when a lady rushed frantically from the midst of a whirling circle of dancers, and, with uplifted hands, shouted at the top of her voice, "Don't sit on my baby, you'll kill it!" Astonished, he suddenly straightened and looked behind him, and sure enough, the bundle was writhing and twisting as if something within were endeavoring to extricate itself. The lady laughed heartily as she took from the roll a babe about six weeks old!

The same gentleman accompanied a party of ladies and officers to a camp of Indian scouts, one evening, to witness a genuine war dance. The frightfully

painted faces of the warriors, rendered more hideous by the dim light of the fire around which the dance began, and their wild chant and cadenced step, presented a picture of savage delight that was both interesting and terrifying to those not familiar with such scenes. When the Indians became thoroughly warmed and excited, the ladies and some of the gentlemen left the group of spectators and joined in the dance. The scouts regarded the participation of the "white squaws" as an omen of success in the next expedition against the hostiles. The intermittent firing of their rifles now became a deafening fusillade. They danced faster and chanted louder than before, and it was not long until the entire party was hidden in a smudge that recalled a dog-fight in a dusty road.



The officers are constantly devising ways and means for the diversion and amusement of the ladies; and they seem to be actuated by the same spirit that made gladiatorial human butchery necessary for the perfection of a Roman holiday, as they do not hesitate to risk life or limb to accomplish their object. And our Government is so generous and gallant that it places upon the "Retired List" officers who become incapacitated for active service by wounds or fractures received in this way, construing such noble self-sacrifice as coming within the "line of duty"; it makes no distinction between the bullet-riddled veteran and the young officer who cracks his patella in attempting a summersault for the edification of the ladies.

In the matter of dress, the ladies of

the Army do not differ materially from their sisters elsewhere. To wear clothes wisely and well seems to be the chief aim in life of many. No sacrifice is too great for them, even to the extent of involving their husbands in debt beyond the reach of their salaries. Costly fabrics are not always the principal item of expense, as when a lady pays four dollars for material, and sixteen dollars to a modiste for making it into a dress. Comfort and health are regarded as bodily pleasures too gross to be considered in the presence of such a subject. Many resolutely brave the bitter cold of winter with half-clad head and shoulders rather than lose any effect of the toilet. The Hindoo devotee, who remains in one position until his joints are stiffened, is scarcely more deprived of bodily freedom than

the well-trained Army belle, whose conventional dress requires the abandonment of every free and natural movement. The human form divine is forced into the most distorted shapes to accommodate it to garments sufficiently small to be considered orthodox. The dusky squaw, arrayed in her red blanket and beads and bangles, exhibits no more strongly her inherent love of decoration than does her pale-faced sister who often sacrifices her sense of good taste and her love of the beautiful in obedience to the mandates of fashion. We would not, however, speak disparagingly of dress. It not only embellishes those with whom nature has dealt sparingly, but it imparts additional charms to the handsome face and form. Dress has advantages possessed by no other external feature — it

secures favor and attention where poor attire even begs for civility. An Army Surgeon was once returning to Fort Dodge, Kansas, from detached service, *via* the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fé Railroad, and, after the train had passed through the more thickly settled parts of the country, there were no passengers remaining on board except those destined for remote points on the frontier. Among them was a tall, finely dressed woman, evidently traveling alone. Her appearance attracted the attention of the Surgeon, who thought such elegance so far from civilization must necessarily belong to the Army, and being delighted with the prospect of terminating his journey more pleasantly than it began, he acted upon this presumption and introduced himself. Upon learning her

name, and that she was going to Fort Dodge to join her husband, then en route to that Post with troops from Fort Hays, he congratulated himself upon the accuracy of his perception, and gallantly placed himself at her service. He expressed himself delighted with the acquisition of herself and husband to the garrison, and assured her that the ladies and gentlemen would feel highly honored in extending to them a cordial welcome. Not being accustomed to little attentions and courtesies from so exalted a source, she looked upon the chivalrous Surgeon with suspicion, and assumed a dignified reticence, which only added vigor to his efforts to get better acquainted. Mistaking reserve and diffidence for fatigue, he pulled off his overcoat, folded it into a convenient shape for a pillow, and

offered it to her, but she modestly declined it. The indefatigable Surgeon was at last highly gratified when she condescended to accept a glass of water. His success in finally getting into her good graces so mixed his zeal and enthusiasm that, in the attempt to procure the water, he stumbled over several lunch baskets and satchels, and whatever else came in his way, much to the annoyance of his fellow-passengers. She maintained the same demeanor throughout the journey, which only strengthened his first impressions and increased the ardor of his attentions. When they arrived at Dodge City, supposing the lady was going directly to the Fort, which was five miles from the railway station, he offered her the hospitality of his house, which she refused, and insisted upon going to a

hotel to await the arrival of her husband. The somewhat nonplused Surgeon had to content himself with bearing her "big box, little box, bandbox and bundles" to the hotel.\* After assuring the lady that he would inform her husband of her arrival, he departed for the Fort. When he arrived there he learned, to his intense astonishment, that this elegant piece of femininity to whom he had shown such distinguished attention was not the wife of a captain, as he supposed, but of a sergeant of the same name. She was a bride, and had come to assume the duties of laundress of the company to which her husband belonged.





## CHAPTER X.

HOW MUCH OF THE UNPLEASANTNESS OF  
ARMY LIFE MIGHT BE OBIATED.

THOUGH some of the practices referred to in the foregoing chapters may be considered objectionable, yet the tenderness of womanly feeling should not be excluded from exerting its due influence on the Army. That noble sense of delicacy which is peculiar to the sex should be ranked among the means for purifying and refining its social character. And even under the present order of things, much unpleasantness might be obviated if the officers would inform their wives, *First*—That military duties are

paramount to all others. *Second*—That they should not feel slighted if the gentlemen do not make frequent calls, but attribute it to circumstances which may prevent, rather than to a disregard of social duties. *Third*—Impress upon their minds the fact that the government makes no provision for ladies in the allotment of quarters, etc. ; that they can claim nothing as a right ; that they are merely the recipients of its courtesy.

Those officers of the General Staff who have been stationed in eastern cities until they have lost their identity as soldiers will be no less surprised at some of the statements herein than citizens at large, as they see but little of Army society proper. A brief experience in the " Line," however, would convince them that the facts have not been exaggerated. And

to those with whose sense of propriety Army usages are not inconsistent, the writer would here state that there are ladies and gentlemen who have successfully resisted their corrupting influences, like those who have lived in a crowded city during a plague without infection. Nature is not more constant in her beneficent purposes than they have been to the noblest attributes of human character, and the valor with which they have supported their love of principle and justice must ever elicit honor and reverence.



## PART SECOND.

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OFFICERS OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY,  
SOCIALY AND OFFICIALLY.



## CHAPTER I.

### ARROGANCE.

“Upon what meat does this our Cæsar feed,  
That he is grown so great?”

—SHAKSPEARE.

**I**T is worthy of remark that the chivalrous spirit which had attained its full perfection in the Army before the Great Rebellion of 1861 is nearly extinct. It is only necessary to run over a few instances in order to see how infinitely less prevalent this inspiration, with its moral and intellectual influences, is now, than it was among the officers of the Old Army. If a mighty change could take place in the quarter where it is most

needed, the Army, although forming a body virtually cut off from the rest of the world, would constitute a society of the higher order. The present organization lacks that ambition — that *esprit de corps* — which characterized the Army prior to the war. Some of the senior officers still maintain among them a remnant, though feeble and mutilated, of the essence of the “good old time.” And yet, if they were to attempt to inaugurate a system of regeneration, without the aid of legislation, there could be no hope that their efforts would be crowned by consequences of universal utility to the Army. Degeneracy has been increased by the appointment of men who have not received a military education. Add to these the “graduates” whom a superabundance of black bile has rendered



unsusceptible of refinement beyond the limited demands of civility, and the sum comprises so much of the unit that the remainder is a negative power. The homogeneity that should characterize the military establishment has been destroyed by the mingling of incongruous elements. The contact of the truly meritorious professionals with non-professionals has given rise to arrogance, and has almost annihilated the spirit of chivalry,

“Such as it had in the days gone by.”

There are many officers in whom the haughty assumption of superiority is conspicuous on all occasions. Rank is the shield behind which they stand to heap tyranny upon insult and wrong. They do not regard inferiors as having rights which they should respect, and by the

tyrannical exercise of authority, they extort a slavish obedience from those over whom they are placed. They look upon a private soldier as a machine — animate, yet without sense of justice or wrong; exacting of him the offices of a menial — a serf — degrading him even in his own estimation. If he dare protest enlistment for boot-black or servant, he is subjected to a course of systematic persecution. His military duties are doubled, so completely crushing him, mentally and physically, that he is driven either to submission or desertion. It sometimes happens that the soldier is superior to the officer by birth and education, as in a case that came under the observation of the writer a short time ago. A young Prussian of good family, highly educated, and of fine personal appearance, ran away from col-

lege, came to the United States and enlisted in the Army as a musician for occupation until he could acquire a knowledge of the English language. He was assigned as trumpeter to a troop of cavalry commanded by a rough old Captain, who took especial delight in persecuting any member of his company who betrayed a degree of culture to which he himself was a stranger; consequently this young soldier suffered to the utmost extent of the Captain's ingenuity. An example of this may be briefly cited: During a campaign of the troop, the trumpeter was detailed to take care of the Surgeon's horse. On one occasion it was dark when the company went into camp, after a long and hard day's march, and the soldiers were directed to merely rub their horses' legs, and defer thorough

grooming till next morning. When they ceased grooming, however, the Captain, taking a lantern, inspected as usual, and found some mud on the hoofs of the Surgeon's horse. He thereupon ordered the musician to groom the animal one hour longer before taking his supper, which was already prepared. Such treatment was constantly repeated until, disheartened and worn out, he deserted.

Officers of this class are invariably deficient in soldierly instincts. They never assume responsibility for the mistakes in which a lack of military knowledge constantly involves them, but audaciously charge it to their subalterns, or their men, as when a campaign results disastrously, or when the execution of their plans betrays erroneous conception—even expecting the officers under them

to anticipate their wishes, when something quite to the contrary is indicated by their orders. The old Captain above alluded to, one day when in the field with his company, halted on the margin of a river for the purpose of camping. Not being quite satisfied with the situation, he left an officer in charge and then proceeded up the valley about three-quarters of a mile farther and found a more suitable place due *west* of the point where he left the troops. Unable to discover himself to the officer with the company from the new location, he rode to a hill a quarter of a mile *north* and beckoned for him to come. The ascent from the position of the troops to the spot where the Captain stood was so gradual as to be inappreciable. When the column was fairly in motion, the Captain

returned to the valley and picketed his horse near the spot selected for his own tent. When the Lieutenant arrived with the company at the point from which the commanding officer signaled, supposing it to be the camp-ground, he dismounted the men, and was about to unsaddle when he was discovered by the Captain, who mounted his horse and dashed off at full speed for the hill, swearing and fuming all the way. He abused the Lieutenant in the presence of the company *for going to the hill*, instead of continuing the march along the river!

The writer does not wish to be understood as condemning all officers who have not received a military education; there are many bright lights among them, though they cannot boast of having acquired their brilliancy in the ranks. But

to support a military school for the education of men in the art and science of war, and to commission men from the peaceful walks of rural life, who do not know a Gatling gun from a coffee-mill, and expect them to perform the same duties, seems to be as great an inconsistency as to ignore the medical profession and call in a blacksmith to diagnose a case of *cerebro-spinal meningitis*. Is it not also inconsistent on the part of the Government to require military cadets, who are appointed as such in consideration of their superior intellectual attainments (determined by competitive examination), to apply themselves assiduously four years to the study of abstruse sciences, and finally subject them to a highly critical examination, which they must pass creditably, before they can be commis-

sioned to the Army, and commission, equally, men from the ranks, whose military knowledge may comprehend no more than the manual of arms, the facings and the marchings, which a monkey might be taught to perform? And it is this mixture of profession and trade that generates arrogance and produces social distinctions that assumed amiability frequently fails to cover.

It has been proven in the Army that a man cannot learn theory from practice — that officers who have not received a military education cannot acquire a knowledge of the science of war by simply commanding and drilling men in tactical evolutions. Within the last four or five years many valuable lives and more than a million of dollars have been sacrificed in the endeavor to make a brigadier-gen-



eral out of a colonel of this class. He took the field under the most favorable auspices. His command was well appointed in everything pertaining to the purpose of war, and was composed of cavalry, artillery and infantry. It constituted the expedition which was sent into the Indian Territory and Texas against the Cheyenne, Kiowa and Comanche Indians, which tribes had united in hostility to the whites. The major portion of his troops was cavalry, of which one regiment had the finest mount in the Army, and nearly all the horses he started with were veteran and inured to the rigors of campaign. He was an infantryman, and, not having a military education, was not familiar with the other arms of the service, and therefore the cavalry and artillery divisions of his little army soon became a

source of trouble to him. In less than two months the bones of many of his horses were bleaching on the plain. The average cavalry sergeant would have done better. He frequently halted his column on barren rocky ground for three or four hours, within two hundred yards of grass and water; or on grass-covered ground for a like time without removing a bit or loosening a girth. When these halts were made it was not known beyond himself whether they were for five minutes or five hours, thus causing the cavalymen to become solicitous about their horses. Assuming to know everything pertaining to campaigning, he would not condescend to ask his officers what their customs were in the field. Imperiousness prevented him from obtaining much useful knowledge. It was hu-

miliating to those officers who had gained a reputation as Indian fighters to be led over the country by a man who had never yet seen a hostile redskin, and knew nothing of his mode of warfare, as was shown in the first battle of the campaign. The troops were advancing from the east, and, when within a mile and a half of the enemy's position, were formed into line of battle, and required to move with as much precision as in a review. To a civilized foe this manœuver might have evinced a readiness for fight, but here it served only to amuse and embolden the Indians, who regarded it as evidence of inexperience and alarm. With artillery in the center supported by infantry, and cavalry on the right and left, he moved into rifle range and halted. He opened fire from the artillery, which he person-

ally superintended, and neglected to give any instructions to his cavalry officers, whose battalions were sitting quietly in their saddles under a heavy fire awaiting orders. 'Twas then that the commander of the First Cavalry Battalion, exasperated at seeing his men shot from their horses without the satisfaction of returning the fire, in breach of discipline took his cap in hand and gave that memorable order, "*Now, then, sweep the h-i-l-l-s!*" The trumpeters sounded the charge, and the battalion left the line of battle and dashed at full speed up the rugged slope, while the shells from a Parrott gun in the rear went screaming through the air above their heads. After clearing the hills of Indians the cavalry halted, and the Commander-in-chief came to them, and was so pleased with the gallant dash

that he never alluded to the transcending authority that directed it, but said to the officers, "Well done, gentlemen, well done!"

Having failed to move forward his base of supplies in time to be available when the stores he took with him were exhausted, his men and horses were now in a starving condition. The Indians became aware of this fact, outgeneraled him and got into his rear, intercepted his supply train and compelled him to retreat one hundred and forty miles, in which retrograde movement he lost one hundred and ten horses by hunger and fatigue. His estimates for supplies, both of subsistence and ammunition, were inadequate for such a campaign as he had mapped out. Lack of military knowledge was the cause of his neglecting the details so essential for

the preservation of an army. His horses were worn out, and most of his cavalry had to be remounted before he could resume offensive operations. He took the band horses of a cavalry regiment and used them for artillery teams, when he might have taken mules for that purpose from his train, by reducing the number which were hauling empty wagons. In crossing a wide river-bed, where there was but little water, a gun-carriage sank so deep into the sand that it was a physical impossibility for the horses to move it. The driver belabored the poor brutes with a "blacksnake" whip until they could hardly stand. Mule harness was used on the horses, and their necks were squeezed into the small collars so tightly that the skin parted and was forced back against their shoulders. Notwithstanding the

blood streamed down their fore legs from their bare, raw necks, the driver continued to lash them. The regiment to which these horses belonged filed through the river, near the gun, and it was touching to see war-worn veterans, who had witnessed the carnage of many a hard-fought field, drop a tear as they beheld their pets thus inhumanly treated; and one old captain rode up to the driver, and, raising his saber high, said, "If you strike those horses another blow, I'll cut you down!"

The aspiring Commander of this expedition would not move his column without a company of scouts in advance followed by a skirmish line, and flankers on the right and left, and a strong rear guard; but he would send an officer with ten men to make a reconnoissance sev-

eral miles in every direction from his camp; and once, just after a battle, he required an officer to go twelve miles along the line of the enemy's retreat with an escort of five men mounted on horses which had already marched thirty miles that day. His utter disregard of the measures which are indispensable for the safety and protection of men and animals when bivouacking, or making a temporary halt, is in striking contrast with his precaution to prevent surprise on the march. The day before a certain battle he was on the trail of, and near, a large force of Indians, and had a strong skirmish line covering the head of his column, which was moving along a plain toward a range of high, rugged hills. At the foot of the hills was a creek running through a narrow valley, and here



he halted to rest and graze the horses preparatory to the approaching fight. The officer in charge of the skirmish line hastened to establish vedettes upon the hills to cover the column, which was dismounted and the horses unsaddled and grazing. Having received no orders in regard to the disposition of his men during the halt, he did that which seemed to him the most important under the circumstances, supposing that the line would be relieved by a fresh one in due time. The General regarded his action as an assumption of authority, and placed him in arrest for not allowing the skirmishers to remain in the valley to water and graze their horses. The trail crossed the stream and passed up the bluff near the point where the column halted, and the Commanding Officer had no means of know-

ing that the Indians were not posted in the ravines and among the rocks ready to deliver a volley that would stampede his horses.

He was sullen and morose whenever his mistakes were made visible to him. When he became aware that his cavalry was breaking down, he issued an order requiring the officers to report to him the condition of their horses. One battalion commander, having reported all of his unserviceable, was informed, in very harsh terms, that *his men should walk*. Thus, this pseudo-General punished his soldiers for a disaster that resulted from his own ignorance of the management of cavalry in the field. He endeavored to save himself from the odium of failure by charging the cavalry officers with a lack of zeal and harmony, but his weak inven-

tion did not sustain him. Like a poor mechanic, he quarreled with his tools.

The cavalry officers of the expedition, having lost their men and horses through his incompetency, felt that they would be recreant to the trust reposed in them by the Government if they did not adopt some measure for its protection, and, accordingly, they prepared charges and specifications setting forth his criminal ignorance, intending to prefer them against him at the close of the campaign. When that time came, and the troops were returned to their stations, it was thought "better to bear the ills we have than fly to those we know naught of," lest they might be so unfortunate as to fall into his hands at some future time and suffer under the code *lex talionis*.

It is an injustice to the experienced

“professionals” of the Army to push forward such an incapable man, intrusting him with important commands in the vain hope of placing a star on his shoulder. No officer ever had a better opportunity for distinction than this campaign presented, but he lacked the essential quality—military knowledge—to attain it. And the public will never know what the experiment cost in men and money without referring to the records of the War Office.

Some of the junior officers of his command obtained pleasant details for writing him up in the newspapers and giving glowing accounts of battles never fought, and exaggerated descriptions of those that were.

Notwithstanding the glaring evidence of his inability that the signal failure of

this expedition furnished, he was afterward given a command in Sitting Bull's range, where he criminally sacrificed officers and men who were superior to himself in every respect. The survivors of his campaigns might justly exclaim —

“When wert thou known in ambushed fights to dare,  
Or nobly face the horrid front of war?  
'Tis ours the chance of fighting fields to try;  
Thine to look on, and bid the valiant die!”

It is a good thing for the Navy that the influence of connections cannot elevate a charlatan to the command of a ship of war. There is a standard of professional merit established for each grade in that branch of the service, and promotions, even in the regular line, cannot be made until the fitness of the candidate for the position is shown by a critical examination.

It may not be considered too great a departure from the subject in hand to say something more about the lack of consistency in the War Department, so far as it affects the *tout ensemble* of the Army and concerns its social and official character. One of its most noticeable inconsistencies relates to the employment of Contract Surgeons. These employés are constantly applying for admission to the Medical Corps, but the standard of qualification is so high that few, if any, ever attain the coveted position. Is it not a gross injustice to the Army to renew and continue the contracts of doctors after the Examining Board has pronounced them incompetent to hold a commission? Men who have tried, time after time, to pass the examination and failed have been placed in charge of

hospitals, and all the responsibility of Post Surgeons conferred upon them. If they are ineligible to commission by reason of their incompetency, is it not palpably wrong to intrust them, in the capacity of fully commissioned surgeons, with the lives of men, women and children? Many precious lives and limbs might be saved to the Army, and much pension money to the public treasury, if this matter were properly adjusted.

As to Chaplains, the War Department shows a more profound interest. That it regards the souls of men as being of greater importance than their bodies is evident from the fact that the duties of salvation are not performed by *laymen under contract*, but by regularly ordained ministers, and under the dignity of a commission. And it may be inferred from

the distribution of chaplains that their presence is deemed more essential at Headquarters Posts, as they are never assigned to any other. But whether this order of things is really to supply a moral necessity, or simply to add sacerdotal dignity to the Staff of the Commanding Officer, is a tabooed question.



## CHAPTER II.

### DEFERENCE TO WEALTH — SERVILE ADULATION.

“Mammon’s a god of rigid decrees,  
Who grants *entre* at fashion’s levees  
When appeal is made with golden fees  
Or servile adulation.  
And many are they who toady to gold  
To obtain caste, or least a good hold,  
In social organization.”

DEFERENCE to wealth is a weakness common to human nature, but nowhere is it more conspicuous than in the United States Army. An officer who can sport a liveried coachman need not “face the horrid front of war.” Wealth is the requisite qualification to insure him

a position in the Staff Corps, or a detail to Europe to observe the movements of contending armies and study their plans of attack and defense — which is usually done at the Army Club Rooms in the cities of Paris and London.

In the affairs of civil life "Offense's gilded hand" buys out the law; but in the transactions of the Army it forestalls justice. It frequently happens that drunken, worthless officers are cashiered by sentence of a court-martial, but through deference to wealth, represented in the accused or his friends, the reviewing authority "takes pleasure in remitting the sentence," or commuting it to "suspension from rank and command" for six months or a year, and thus justice is baffled, and the delinquent, lost to all sense of pride and manhood, resumes his

former official position. Many examples of immunity from punishment through the influence of money might be cited, but suffice it to give one, showing how a Commanding Officer was persuaded by a rich member of his Staff to use his power arbitrarily. During the march of a battalion of cavalry from the States to its station in one of the Territories a difficulty occurred between a company commander and the Quartermaster of the battalion in regard to the loading of a wagon. The latter officer, not being familiar with the various duties of his new office, had transcended his authority in the matter mentioned. The company officer put his grievance in writing, in accordance with law and regulations, and forwarded it to the Commanding Officer, who knew the complaint was correct and

just but would not admit it because the Quartermaster held his note for a large sum of money. He referred the paper to the latter officer for remarks, and it was returned with an indorsement that covered three sheets of letter-paper, in which he (the Quartermaster) made the most vindictive and unscrupulous accusations against the plaintiff, justifying himself in all that he had done. He delivered the document in person to the Commanding Officer and requested him to put an indorsement on it sustaining him (the Quartermaster) and transmit it to the company commander. In compliance with the request it was indorsed as follows :

“Respectfully returned to the Commanding Officer of Company —, who is hereby informed that the indorsement of the Quartermaster hereon is

conclusive, and that no more correspondence upon this subject will be received at these Headquarters."

Chapters might be written upon the subject of persecution and injustice in the United States Army through the instrumentality of wealth, of which the foregoing citation is a mild type and of everyday occurrence.



## CHAPTER III.

### PATRICIAN PREJUDICES.

“Can place or lessen us or aggrandize?  
Pygmies are pygmies still, though perch'd on Alps;  
And pyramids are pyramids in vales.”

—YOUNG.

THERE is no feature of American society so anomalous and inconsistent with the principles of our government as the airs of nobility which many of our Army officers assume. There are no people on the face of the earth who have arrived at that proud eminence of civilization which recognizes the propriety of wearing clothes that the aping of aristocracy so ill becomes as Americans.

Public sentiment is against it, and in this country, where all men are born free and equal, public sentiment is the final arbiter of custom, and no faction can successfully oppose it. It has been aptly said,

“Of all the notable things on earth,  
The queerest one is pride of birth,  
Among our ‘fierce democracy!’  
A bridge across a hundred years,  
Without a prop to save it from sneers,  
Not even a couple of rotten *peers*,—  
A thing for laughter, fleers, and jeers,  
Is American Aristocracy!

“English and Irish, French and Spanish,  
Germans, Italians, Dutch and Danish,  
Crossing their veins until they vanish  
In one conglomeration!  
So subtle a tangle of blood, indeed,  
No Héraldry Harvey will ever succeed  
In finding the circulation.

“Depend upon it, my snobbish friend,  
Your family thread you can’t ascend,



Without good reason to apprehend  
You may find it *waxed*, at the farther end,  
By some plebeian vocation !  
Or, worse than that, your boasted line  
May end in a loop of stronger twine,  
That plagued some worthy relation ! ”

Wealth and position do not make a gentleman. He may be found in tatters or in broadcloth, in the workshop or in the Senate, in the wilds of the border or in the fields of agriculture — find him where we may, he is recognized only by the attributes of noble manhood.

“ ’Tis soul, and heart, and a’ that,  
That makes the king a gentleman,  
And not his crown, and a’ that ;  
\* And man with man, if rich or poor,  
The best is he, for a’ that,  
Who stands erect in self-respect,  
And acts the man, for a’ that. ”

The gilded pageantry of our Army files by us in review, and here and there we

see the champions of nobility, mounted on gaily caparisoned chargers, blandly smiling as they pass a group of ladies who flaunt their kerchiefs to the breeze in recognition and salutation. Lo, these knights are summoned to council! What means the haste? Is war upon us? No, no! They are not called to deliberate upon *affaires militaire*, but upon an *affaire du cœur*. It has just been announced that an officer is about to marry a young lady of low estate — the daughter of the caterer of the Officers' Mess! The council has convened to protest against the marriage. After condemning the proposed alliance, they inform the officer that his marriage with a girl of plebeian birth will not only compromise the regiment, but that he will be ostracised by his comrades, and that the lady

can never be admitted to social equality in the Army. She had been educated in a convent, and was lovely, accomplished, amiable, and in every respect a desirable woman, but her lowly origin debarred her from the circle of the *haut ton* of that regiment.

“I see not that flesh is holier than flesh,  
Or blood than blood more choicely qualified,  
That scorn should dwell between them.”

The lover, “sighing like furnace,” and “full of strange oaths,” gallantly faced the storm of indignation, married the girl and returned to the station of his company on the frontier, taking his bride with him. The garrison of the Post to which she went, knowing nothing of her previous history, gave her a cordial welcome. The amiability and graceful bearing of the new-comer soon endeared her

to them, and she became the most honored lady of the Post. During her sojourn there many troops came and went, and all who had the pleasure of meeting her, and partaking of the unbounded hospitality which she always extended to strangers, still praise her genial manner and admirable qualities. After a lapse of two or three years, she returned to spend the Christmas holidays with her mother, who occupied the quarters in which the Officers' Mess was conducted. The old lady, being aware of the social prejudices of the Army, and expecting her daughter to receive the usual courtesies extended to an officer's wife, very considerably relinquished her parlors for the entertainment of any who might call, and prepared to keep herself and family in the extreme distance. There were

seven ladies and sixteen officers present. One of the latter was a member of the garrison which occupied the Post at the time of the young lady's marriage, and was of the same regiment as her husband, but not of the opposing faction. The visitor arrived two days before Christmas, and no one, except the officer alluded to, called upon her until New Year's Day, and then under the following circumstances: In the morning the officers, in full dress, assembled at the Adjutant's office preparatory to making the customary call upon the Commanding Officer. After the usual ceremony of wine and cigars with that dignitary at his quarters, they called upon every lady of the *garrison*, and then marched into a bachelor's quarters to take a parting glass of egg-nogg. When the officer of

the regiment to which the lady belonged discovered that the party had performed their programme and were about to disperse, he made the following statement :

“Gentlemen, the presence at this Post of a lady of the regiment to which I belong has been so conspicuously ignored by the officers and ladies of the garrison that it becomes my duty to report the fact to my comrades, whose indignation will certainly be put into a tangible form. If this party disbands without calling upon her, I shall consider it an insult to the regiment, and shall make it a personal matter.”

The Commanding Officer, who had joined the party, replied that he was glad the matter had been mentioned, and at his suggestion they called upon her. They were so elegantly entertained that

the same officer afterward remarked that he would rather have lost his commission than to have failed to make the call. Hers was the finest reception at the Post that day, and the ease and ability with which she entertained her guests commanded their unbounded admiration. Her apt quotations and ready wit were an intellectual feast which so far excelled anything of the kind given by the ladies of pedigree, who had not condescended to notice her, that the gentlemen unanimously proclaimed her "Queen of the Banquet." The surprised, delighted, and somewhat conscience-stricken gentlemen returned to their homes to sing her praises, in which they were doubtless more assiduous when they recalled the fact that a few days previous she was compelled to walk five miles (the dis-

tance to the nearest town) and back, to do some shopping, having been refused an ambulance.

Some time after she had returned to the station of her husband, the most active member of the council before mentioned happened along sick. He was attached to a large command that halted for a few days near the Post. This magnanimous lady, accompanied by her husband, went to the camp and tendered to the invalid the hospitality of her home, which was accepted, and he dined with her that day. When departing from her house, he remarked to one who knew of his former opposition, "I'm sorry I ever said anything disparaging of Mrs. —, and objected to her coming into the regiment. She is a bright, generous lady."



This may seem to be an extraordinary case, but similar ones are by no means rare. Miss Trafton has ably pictured, in her story entitled "His Inheritance," the persecutions that an officer's wife may be compelled to endure from those who claim superiority by the accident of birth or position. Poor little Blossom Elyot, beautiful, amiable and refined, is utterly ignored by the ladies of the garrison; and, even in view of the supposed death of her gallant husband, refused those expressions of sympathy and regard that a feeling of humanity alone would dictate; and all this because her old father, who is dead, had been the Post Trader.

Those officers who arrogate superiority are imperious, and consequently tyrannical to their men. In reproving a delinquent soldier, they use the most vio-

lent and abusive epithets that our copious English language is capable of expressing, and sometimes accompany them with blows. They are uncharitable not only to those under their command, but to any impecunious citizen whom adversity may have driven to them for succor. It is a common thing on the frontier for men who have been robbed by Indians or highwaymen, or reduced to want by the failure of a mining speculation, to apply to the military authorities for food, or for an escort through a hostile region to a settlement where they can obtain relief. When such applications are made to an officer of this class, they are invariably refused in rough and threatening terms. The author was present at a remote Post when a man came in on horseback with the United States mail, which he had

brought forty miles, and which he desired to carry to a point thirteen miles beyond the Post. The Indians captured the mail stage the day previous and killed the passengers, driver and horses, and this man was employed to convey the mail to a point on another stage line. He mentioned to the Commanding Officer the importance of getting the mails through, and then asked him for an escort, which was peremptorily refused. The poor man, whose sunburned face was covered with the sweat and dust of his weary march, felt that he stood in the august presence of an imperial magnate. With hat in hand, and in the most respectful manner, he solicited the loan of a pistol or other firearm, promising to return it the following day, and added that he was a stranger, and that there was

great risk involved in crossing the mountains so near the stronghold of the Indians without some means of defense. The officer told him he would not lend arms to citizens. The man's sense of duty, however, induced him to attempt the passage without a weapon of any kind. Thus determined, he was about to mount his horse, when the unfeeling officer had the presumption to ask him to carry a note to a member of the guard at the mail station whither he was bound. He readily assented and waited until it was prepared, then, placing the note in his vest pocket, rode away on his perilous undertaking. In less than an hour afterward the man was slain and mutilated upon the highway, by the savages, in sight of the Post. The *brave* Commander, surrounded by a strong guard of

soldiers, ventured to the spot where the defenseless man lay murdered. He examined the pockets of the victim with a view to identification, and took therefrom his own note, which had been pierced by a ball that entered the man's side, and was saturated with blood. The officer preserved the note as a relic of Indian barbarity! This was the sixth or seventh case of almost immediate death of unprotected men who had applied at that Post for arms or escort. In two cases the applicants were driven away hungry.

If in the "vast solitudes of eternal space there throbs the being of an awful God" who avenges and punishes the wrongs of this world, then let such imperious officers take heed lest the blood that cries from the mountain fastnesses

and the desolate plain give answer to the old question, "Where is thy brother?"

Man's weaknesses are about the same everywhere. The desire for applause is inherent and common to all. It incites men to action, and inspires them with the hope of achieving glory and greatness. This feature of human character is as frequently seen in civil life as in the Army; but in the former, the aspirant cannot demand plaudit before he attains the goal of his ambition—he has no command, no power till then; in the latter, however, men are clothed with authority, and many of them assume an air of importance superior to their position, and demand from those who come within their jurisdiction the homage which is paid to nobility. When men thus place themselves upon a pedestal, and claim to

be the par excellence of the human race, they are the subjects of scrutiny and criticism, and their quality is determined by their own standard. Even the private soldier forms an opinion of his officers, but he dare not give utterance to the verdict of his judgment until he is released from the bonds of enlistment and returned to the freedom of his peers; then, looking from the standpoint of a citizen, he recounts the insults he has endured, the degrading offices he has been compelled to perform, and all the wrongs that a supercilious officer could inflict.

This class of officers often have the extremely bad taste to carry their *hauteur* into the social circle. If a lady, through ignorance or mistake, addresses one of them with a title below his rank, or gives

the full rank instead of the brevet, he swells with emotion, and, with insolent brevity, corrects her.

A Post Commander once made himself so disagreeable in this way that the wife of the Surgeon, aided and abetted by the other ladies of the garrison, persuaded her husband to give him a half-year's sick leave. It was only necessary to suggest that he looked bad, and that a sea voyage would do him good, to induce him to seize the bait, and in less than two weeks he was a passenger on an ocean steamer. Let us follow him a little way on his journey and see how his mightiness conducts himself "off duty." He occupied a state-room with a junior officer who was traveling on duty. There were three berths in the room, one above another. The middle one being the best situated



for the uses of greatness, as there would be no compromise of dignity by climbing, and no uncertainty of making a lodgment when the ship was rolling, the grave and potent senior unceremoniously took possession of it. The junior stifled his feelings of envy with the idea of promotion, and submissively ascended to the upper bunk, where he reclined and deliberated upon the possibilities of man. The "sick" man was aware of the benefits to be derived from early rising and the bath, and consequently reveille found him at the bar taking an "eye-opener," after which he performed his ablution, using all the water and towels which had been provided for both occupants. When the scarcity of water and towels is an exigency of a campaign, the matter can be viewed philosophically; but when the

Government pays for these luxuries, to go unwashed would be an unpardonable remissness; so our junior, to maintain the honor of his country, applied for an additional pitcher of water, and directed the steward to put his towel into a satchel which was left open for that purpose. There were several ladies on board, who, with their husbands and the two officers, constituted a select party which occupied seats at that end of the dining table presided over by the Captain of the ship. To see the "invalid" eat afforded the company a never-failing source of diversion, though they were careful to observe the warning,

"If much you note him,  
You offend him; feed and regard him not."

He perched his elbows upon the table, to the right and left as far as he could span,

to prevent the encroachment of his neighbors ; inclined his head over his plate and devoured everything which was brought to him with an avidity that alarmed the beholders and disgusted the waiters ; never raising his eyes except to follow with greedy glare a dish that was being removed beyond the range of his arms, or when drinking coffee, which instantly disappeared as water down a dark abyss. When dessert came on, this Epicurean philosopher sat behind a perfect barricade

“Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and gourd ;  
With jellies soother than the creamy curd,  
And lucent syrops tinct with cinnamon,”

and heaped these delicacies upon his plate with an unsparing hand. Alas for the waiter who had the temerity to attempt to despoil him of a single dish ! A stentorian voice cried, “Bring that back !” in

tones which enforced a trembling obedience. On one occasion, the Captain of the ship was heard to remark that this officer was the heartiest eater for a sick man he ever saw, as he never missed a meal nor declined to take a drink. With the same disregard of the rights of others which he had manifested at the table, he treated the passengers with his roommate's cigars, when he had plenty of his own, and used without permission the arms and ammunition which the junior had in charge, knowing that the latter had to account to the United States for every cartridge. He seemed to think that the world was created for one person, and that he was that favored individual. The ship touched at a foreign port, and the ladies and gentlemen made up a party to go ashore to spend a day in

shopping and sight-seeing, appointing the Captain of the vessel purser and general manager of the little expedition. The ex Post Commander, ever ready to avail himself of opportunities for amusement, was a member of the party. The ladies, by this time, had ceased to expect any civilities from him, and were not surprised, when their small boat arrived at the dock, to see him stalk off without offering to assist them in the difficult ascent of the dilapidated stairway at the landing; nor when he took a carriage and explored the city alone. They cannot, therefore, be blamed for taking a little quiet satisfaction in his discomfiture when, after viewing, with the knowing air of a connoisseur, the pictures on the walls of the parlor of the hotel where they breakfasted, he inquired the

name of the artist who painted one which he greatly admired, and was informed by the clerk that the picture was a *chromo*!—

“His giantship is somewhat crestfallen,  
Stalking with less unconscionable strides,”

but soon recovers his wonted equanimity. He evidently considered the whole affair as gotten up for his especial entertainment, as it never occurred to him to reimburse the Captain for his share of the general expense incurred on the occasion. But enough! We will leave him to his selfish devices.

Patrician blood does not flow in the veins of every officer who plays the rôle of a nobleman. That part is frequently taken by those who cannot boast of even the best plebeian origin. It often happens that an overseer on public works, who controls a large number of votes, is given

a cadetship for his son, in consideration of his influence in the election of a Congressman, regardless of the young man's score in a competitive examination. Congressmen frequently exercise their prerogative to their own political advantage. The following report is taken from the records of a commission which met in the State of California to examine aspirants for a cadetship at West Point:

Applicants.	Reading.	Writing.	Spelling.	Grammar.	Arithmetic.	Geography.	History.	Average.
A .....	90	90	37	77	68	85	85	85
B.....	70	50	27	35	44	52	52	52
C.....	90	75	44	84	79	86	86	85
D .....	90	90	33	90	90	91	91	91
E .....	65	40	22	30	35	100	100	44

D had the highest average, but E received the appointment—the Congressman thus ignoring the meritorious competitor. This class of appointees generally makes officers who are better adapted for holding the plow than wielding the saber.



## CHAPTER IV.

### A LUDICROUS PHASE OF FRONTIER SERVICE.

“But wad ye see him in his glee —  
For meikle glee and fun has he —  
Then set him down, and twa or three  
Gude fellows wi’ him;  
And port, O port! shine thou a wee,  
And then ye’ll see him!”

—BURNS.

NOWHERE do we see more strikingly verified Shakspeare’s words,

“One man in his time plays many parts,”  
than in the Army. To-day, comedy; to-morrow, tragedy. An officer’s frontier experience, however, partakes largely of the serio-comic. When he first takes the field he is full of zeal, and wonders why

the Indian question has not been settled years ago. He feels confident in his own ability to put to rest forever the turbulent savage, but his conceit is somewhat dampened when he is called upon to apply his theory. He finds campaigning different from the routine duties of garrison life. Ultra refinement in diet, dress and companionship is replaced by a more healthful state of feeling. A young officer, inflated with such ideas, joined an expedition on the border, and was so fastidious that he could not breakfast without quail on toast, or dine without a juicy roast of beef, a great variety of vegetables, and an elaborate dessert; a thumb-daub on the margin of a dish was sufficient to condemn the edible it contained; a greasy or coffee-stained table-cloth brought down upon the cook the most scorching invec-

tives; and soup with a fly in it, or a biscuit containing the organic remains of a cockroach, was ample provocation for a change of boarding house. After this squeamish gentleman took the field he fell away rapidly, and was soon reduced to a mere shadow of his former self. Camp life, however, sharpened his appetite and toned his stomach so that he could devour pork and hard-tack with wonderful avidity, relish a cup of coffee in which half a dozen grasshoppers had met their death, and smile exultingly at the unfortunate insects floating on the surface of the seething fluid. This wholesome change was peculiarly gratifying to his comrades, who had previously been annoyed by his Epicurean instincts. One of them, who was so unfortunate as to have him for a messmate, hugely enjoyed

seeing him contend with a hungry dog for a bone. The circumstances were these: Disaster having befallen the expedition and reduced it to the verge of starvation, these two gentlemen, on one occasion, investigated the condition of their larder with a view to the possibility of a meal. One found in his saddle-bags a handful of cracker crumbs and a can of tomatoes, and he of luxurious tastes triumphantly produced a hip-bone—a relic of the last beef of the commissary, slaughtered some days before. It had already furnished several meals, and there was hardly enough meat left to make a respectable plate of soup; and sand, dust and horse-hairs amply atoned for the absence of condiments. With such materials at hand, they blithely proceeded to the preparation of the feast, when a

hungry dog appeared on the scene. Evidently thinking the dinner was over, he looked at the bone with an expression of disgust that said as plainly as canine could, "How mean, to pick a bone so close—a dog would hardly do it," and waited patiently for something to be added to this morsel. At last, concluding that he might expect nothing more, he took it and leisurely trotted off. The owner thereof, turning suddenly and seeing their principal reliance thus surreptitiously disappearing, seized a club and rushed frantically to the rescue. The faithful scavenger, hearing fierce imprecations in the rear, looked back with honest gaze to ascertain the cause, when a vigorous blow forced him to drop the bone and flee from impending death.

The peculiar and extraordinary men

found on the frontier present to the officer new features of human character which are fascinating as a study, but not always commendable for imitation ; yet, some gentlemen become so enraptured with the study that the pursuit of knowledge discovers an affinity for the man himself. It is interesting to see what strange boon companions share the hospitality, even to bed and board, of officers who, prior to their frontier service, were so fastidious that they would scarcely notice a citizen in broadcloth, much less tolerate one whose clothes bore evidence of honest toil. They find that society beyond the confines of civilization does not justify this distinction. There, the lawyer, doctor, bandit and miner, as well as the vaquero, settler, gambler, stage-driver and hunter, are clad in the same inevitable

blue or gray woolen overshirt, not worn as the Indians of Manila wear theirs, but neatly tucked into the pants, which are of all colors from primary to tertiary, and made of fabrics varying from buckskin, jeans and prison check to the immaculate doeskin ; and often all these materials are so ingeniously combined in the same pair that it is impossible to determine the original foundation. This garment is supported by a leather belt from which depend a six-shooter and a sheath-knife. The head is usually covered with a black, soft-felt hat.

Military Posts are the favorite resort of the frontiersman. The Trader's store, like the immortal Bascom's at the Confederate Cross Roads, is the chief attraction, and here is the best place to make the acquaintance of the representative

characters of the border. Though they are passionately fond of bar-room life and whisky, one would hardly be justified in the assertion that they are too lazy to work, or too proud to beg, or that they ever become incorrigible loafers and go into politics. However, they are partially demoralized and in favor of an easy sort of life. They believe in the universal brotherhood of man, and that mutual affection and mutual help should be the rule of life. The Post Trader always has a tap-room in his building, adjacent to the bar-room, for the use of officers and citizens, into which a private soldier is not allowed even to look. In this rendezvous of the select may be heard

“ \* \* \* \* \* the sound

Of riot, and ill-managed merriment.”

At almost any time of day or night there



may be seen, seated around a center-table, a motley group of officers and border characters playing Pedro, Seven Up, or Poker, for money and "the drinks." We recall a scene: The usual card party at the center-table playing Pedro; at one side of the room is a long table upon which are the feet of an officer and those of two men from the dark places in the mountains, and whisky, lemons, sugar, cigars and tumblers (side party are having a confidential talk, exchanging compliments in mutual admiration); a citizen, with buckskin pants profusely ornamented with patches of other skins, and an officer, are lying in fond embrace upon a couch almost hidden under a canopy of tobacco smoke, sleeping off an excess of toddy.

An ex Indian Agent of local celebrity was a frequenter of one of these resorts.

He was a genial fellow, could tell a good joke, sing songs, was preëminently fond of whisky, and had insidiously crept into the favor of the ladies and officers of the Post. He had formerly been a stage-driver on the mountains, and had an extensive knowledge of the country and of the habits of the Indians, and was always on the alert for an opportunity to relate his numerous hair-breadth escapes. His birthday was quadrennial, and he never failed to make it a memorable event. He was at the Post on the return of one of these happy occasions, and he invited the officers to come to the Trader's store immediately after guard-mount to aid in the celebration of the day. The ex Agent was about six feet two inches in height, and he dressed his long, lank figure in holiday attire, without regard to modern

styles or the opinion of others. He wore a towering beaver whose pristine beauty had been replaced by the polish of age and hard usage; his pants were of buckskin, and the rains of many seasons had reduced them to the proportions of those seen upon the conventional Brother Jonathan; his coat was of the pattern known as "Shanghai," with a pocket on either side of the skirt; his feet were encased in buckskin moccasins with soles of cowhide upon which the hair still remained.

The gentlemen promptly responded to the invitation; cards, billiards, songs and toasts were enlivened by the free flow of champagne, and they loudly shouted "*Vive l'hôte!*"

The ex Agent, having an almost superstitious regard for the favor of the fair sex, felt that he could not be entirely

happy, nor safely hope for "many returns," unless they, too, rejoiced over the event of his birth. When the enthusiasm of the gentlemen was at its height, he quietly withdrew from their circle and prepared for a tilt with the ladies. Feeling assured that it was only necessary to furnish the means, he placed a bottle of wine in either pocket of his coat, and, taking three in each hand, started for their quarters. With hat hanging on the back of his head, and a lock of hair resembling a bunch of tangled moss covering his eyes, he tacked across the parade ground like a ship sailing against a strong head-wind. He was bound for the Commanding Officer's house, which he safely reached and seated himself on the doorstep to rest. He was soon discovered by the wife of that official, who thought the open air

was best for one in his condition, and therefore did not invite him into the house, but coquettishly asked if he were sick. To which he replied, "I'm celebratin' an event that has been a great blessin' to that branch of the human family which I represent."

"Pray to what event do you allude?" inquired the lady.

"My advent into this world, madam! And I desire the ladies to rejoice with me, and here's the stuff to do it with! I'll leave you a couple of bottles now, and ask you to excuse me until I go around and supply the other ladies, so as to give you all an even start," was the answer.

After distributing the wine, he made another round to take a glass with them, and to receive their blessings and good wishes. It took a great quantity of liquor

to get his entire giant frame under its influence—the average man would go down under a burden that served merely as an appetizer for him—but his body now began to wax limber, and one fair reveler, fearing she would have a case of helpless inebriation on her hands, requested him to invite some of the gentlemen to join them. In compliance with her wishes, he returned to the Trader's store, where he found the officers pleasantly engaged in songs and games. He asked them to unite with the ladies, but they were unanimous in their opposition to alliance with the female faction. And

“Ere night's midmost, stillest hour was past,”  
the revelry had ceased.

“There are no ears to hear, or eyes to see—  
Drown'd all in Rhenish, and the sleepy mead!”

When one drops in to spend an hour

or two with an officer, and finds him entertaining a man that looks like a deserter from Falstaff's army, he is at a loss to know what his friend sees to admire, or that is in the least congenial. He inquires, and is told that that man is a mine of information; that he knows all the chiefs and men of importance of every tribe of Indians in the country; that he is familiar with their haunts, and is a good guide. As the intimacy does not cease for several weeks, the most charitable inference is that an inexhaustible source of provincial history has been discovered.

Owing to the transitory nature of frontier life, these singular friendships, however profound at the time, are not generally of long duration, and it is not safe to depend too much upon them.

“There is no union here of hearts,  
That finds not here an end.”

An officer who had taken to his bosom a man of this type, in whom he placed the most implicit confidence and trust, was separated from him by a change of station. Not long afterward, a Court of Inquiry was convened to investigate a charge which had been made against the officer prior to leaving his former Post. He appeared before the court and asked for a postponement of the case until he could procure an important witness from Kansas. The request was granted, a summons was issued for his quondam friend, and the court adjourned to meet at the call of the Recorder. Forty days afterward the subpoena was returned bearing the following endorsement:

“Respectfully returned to Capt. —, Recorder of Court of Inquiry, with the information that the



within named witness was hanged by a party of citizens, for horse-stealing, near Wichita, Kansas, on the —— day of ——, 1876."

In speaking of the influence of border associations, it may be truly said that even the Chaplains partake of the general spirit of recklessness. We recall the ride of an old Chaplain that deserves to be handed down to posterity with those of John Gilpin and Tam O'Shanter, though his object for taking it was quite different from that of either of those famous gentlemen. Two soldiers died at a cavalry camp which was situated about two miles from the Fort at which the Chaplain was stationed, and he was requested to perform the burial service. As the funeral procession had to pass the Post on its way to the cemetery, which was half a mile distant, he remained at his quarters

looking for it until the sun was nearly down. Weary with watching, he fell asleep in his chair. The *côrtege* passed quietly by unnoticed, and when the head of the column had almost reached the city of the dead, the band began to play a dirge, and the mournful notes, wafted by the evening breeze to the old man's ears, waked him. He ran to the stable to get his horse, which was already saddled, and, mounting in hot haste, took a direct line for the graveyard. Disregarding the order which prohibited riding or driving faster than a walk along the street in front of the officers' quarters,

"Away went " Chaplain — "who but he?"

Down the street at top of speed, a cloud of dust behind him, as when a storm comes suddenly. The Post was inclosed

by a high, rustic fence, which turned the street at a right angle at the end of the row of quarters, and followed it about two hundred yards to a gate. The outlet, however, was not on his course, and, plying the spurs to the horse's sides, he guided for the fence.

“Away went” Chaplain, “neck or naught;  
Away went hat and wig.”

“The dogs did bark, the children screamed,  
Up flew the windows all;  
And every soul cried out, ‘Well done!’  
As loud as he could bawl.”

Over the fence, and over the prairie, like the wind he flew, and entered the cemetery at the head of the procession, much to the amusement of the soldiers, his bald head shining in the last rays of the setting sun like a gilded ball on a church

spire. He performed the ceremony and then went in search of his hat and wig.

There are officers who systematically persecute their juniors and conduct themselves, socially and officially, in a capricious and vacillating manner. The junior is ever alert for some measure of retribution, and if it comes in the line of duty, as when he is assigned to command on his brevet rank and has control of his former commander, it is generally as ample as was that of Pitman's boy. This lad, it will be remembered, acquired the rudiments of his education in a log school-house. At one place the plaster was broken away between the logs, and through this aperture the boy endeavored to escape, feet foremost, during school hours. Unfortunately, he stuck fast when half way through.

The attention of the teacher was directed to the culprit, and he proceeded to the exterior of the edifice and embraced the opportunity afforded by the boy's position to inflict punishment with a shingle. Near the school-house there was a mill-race, at the end of which was a sluice-gate; below the gate was a huge tank fifteen feet deep, which carried water to an undershot wheel; the inside of the tank was green and slimy, and when the water was carefully drawn out, a great many fish could often be found lying on the bottom. A few days after the flogging the boy was passing the tank, and, happening to look in, saw his teacher at the bottom picking up fish and putting them into a bag. The boy felt that the hour of vengeance had struck. He turned the handle of the sluice-gate, and

in less than a minute that jolly old pedagogue was floundering in six feet of water, trying in vain to clamber up the slimy sides of the tank. When he saw the boy, he shrieked to him for help. But the lad, with fiendish coolness, said, "No, sir; you've got to tread water until you promise never to lick me again."

When satisfaction is given unwittingly, and in the line of pleasure, it becomes a reminiscence to laugh over at the camp-fire or the mess-table until it is incorporated into the legends of the Army. A Department Commander once attended a masquerade ball in costume, and the frequent potations in which he indulged finally betrayed him to some juniors, who exulted in this opportunity to wipe out old scores. When the exhilarating effects of the wine became general, they got

around and pretended to recognize him as one of their chums, and one of them struck him vigorously on the back and said, "You can't fool me, Jack, I know you!" The old gentleman, delighted with the thought that his disguise was perfect, chuckled inwardly, and aided, to the extent of his physical endurance, the supposed deception. Another youngster leaned heavily upon the General's shoulder and confidentially asked if he could point out the Department Commander, adding, "I want to see how the old fool looks in costume." Another seized him around the waist and said, "Come, Jack, let's have a waltz," at the same time spinning him around like a top. When they had whirled into the middle of the room, the junior purposely made a misstep and threw the old fellow violently to the floor

and fell upon him. This seeming contre-temps was a climax of fun for the others, who had followed closely, watching for an opportunity to trip him themselves. In this manner he allowed himself to be knocked about until he saw a good chance for escape, and then retired from the room much exhausted but still pleased with the idea of mistaken identity.

Apropos: To show the "many parts" an officer may play, even in one day, we relate the occurrences of a certain St. Patrick's Day in the Army. The Commander proclaimed it a holiday, and gave his men as much latitude as he allowed them on the Fourth of July. He honored the occasion by drinking freely himself and forbidding the arrest of anyone for drunkenness. When he had imbibed a sufficient quantity of different beverages



to put him on unusually good terms with himself and the rest of mankind, he became exceedingly zealous in his efforts to make the celebration successful. He arranged a programme for horse, mule, bag, and wheelbarrow races, catching a greased pig, climbing a soaped pole, and various other sports. The exercises, except the horse and mule races, took place on the parade ground, and he acted as master of ceremonies. He played the rôle of the Soldiers' Friend, and, as an evidence of his regard, changed his nationality as occasion required. If a son of Erin chanced to approach him, he made minute inquiries respecting his ancestors, and declared himself to be a native of the Green Isle; if a Dutchman, he saluted him in Dutch, and said that he had not been from the Vaterland long enough to

quite forget his mother tongue; if a Frenchman, he claimed descent from General Lafayette, and was loud in his praises of La Belle France; and so on through the whole list of nationalities represented. Before the day ended, this man of *multæ linguæ* was unable to distinguish an Irishman from a moon-eyed son of the Orient—which fact led many to doubt the sincerity of his protestations of brotherly love.

## CHAPTER V.

### INTEMPERANCE—PROFITS OF POST TRADER-SHIPS.

“Alake! that e’er my Muse has reason  
To wyte her countrymen wi’ treason!  
But monie daily weet their weason  
Wi’ liquors nice,  
An’ hardly, in a winter’s season,  
E’er spier her price.”  
—BURNS.

“The gold that sinful occupation yields,  
But gilds the way to regions of the damn’d.”

FROM what quarter the Army derived its popular and almost universal custom of drinking intoxicating liquors—whether it is a bequest of Alexander the Great to the sons of Mars and passed down through the ages in lineal

descent—its legends do not tell. Little can be said of the social life of the Army without introducing the fabled god of wine. Observe the officers socially, and we see more to condemn than to admire; a mingling of noble attributes with the lowest vices; the intellect in some cases brilliant and growing brighter, and in others irretrievably lost in the depths of infamy. Among them we meet with magnanimity and gallantry, with sympathies that enter into our feelings and supply all our wants; but we perceive that everything tends to an extreme; vitiated taste is continually seeking a change—gallantry gives place to profligacy; no one is satisfied with his actual rank, but strives to surpass or supplant his senior, and that, too, by every device of which he is capable—

“None cared what way he gained, so gain were his”—hence, there is deception, flattery and fawning.

It is unnecessary to refer to those open and avowed drunkards that, like vermin on carrion, such a state of society must inevitably propagate and nourish, but we will give our attention to the lank victims of hopelessness and desperation — wrecked magnificence — blighted prospects—official complications that foreshadow ruin—and numerous other miseries which are born of intemperance. We might here ask Dr. Good’s pertinent question, “Which of the two extremes of society is pregnant with the greater share of moral evils—that of gross barbarism, or that of an exuberant and vitiated polish?”

The officers still cling to that antiquated

idea that the hospitality of a gentleman is not complete without liquor, and therefore keep it in their houses. They entertain generously, and the guest who drinks the greatest quantity of spirits without losing control of his senses is generally looked upon with much favor. Among the junior officers there are those who take especial pride in drinking whisky without dilution, particularly if in the presence of veterans whom a similar bravado, in the days of their youth, has made dyspeptic and unable to take it without water. One quart of high-proof whisky per day is drunk by some of the young officers without producing visible intoxication, but this is rare.

The blighting curse of intemperance destroys ninety per cent more of the Army than powder and ball. Its wither-

ing effects may be seen upon officers who have not yet reached the meridian of life. With shattered constitution, they tremble on the brink of a drunkard's grave—men who might have made themselves famous as warriors, but preferred to expend their genius in dissipation and revelry. Imbecility has taken the place of the vigorous manhood that characterized their earlier years, and they are given commands in the field to the prejudice of the service and humanity.

An officer who was an habitual drunkard was once sent with his company after a band of Indians who were murdering settlers in Kansas, and was so drunk that he could not read the order which detailed him for the duty. He had been on the trail but a few hours when his scouts reported the Indians encamped within

half a mile of him. Alcohol had so prostrated his nervous system that he had become delirious and cowardly,—constantly boding evil,—and the prospect of an engagement so completely demoralized him that he camped immediately to give the Indians an opportunity to escape.

“ \* \* \* erect his hair,  
Bristled his limbs, and with amaze he stood,  
Mute and all motionless.”

“ \* \* \* while horror chill  
Ran through his veins, and all his joints relaxed.”

Two companies of cavalry, which had been sent out from another Post in pursuit of the same Indians, came upon him, and as they were in charge of officers who were his juniors, he assumed command by virtue of his prerogative and required them to remain with him. Such a golden chance for distinction seldom falls to the lot of a young officer, but this man's



pride and ambition had been drowned in the infamy of dissipation. Once, after a prolonged debauch, he was required by his Post Commander to give a sworn pledge that he would abstain from the use of intoxicating liquors for six months. He wrote and subscribed the promise, and made oath by the Holy Evangelists to keep it inviolate; but as the term "whisky" was commonly accepted to include all kinds of intoxicants, he studiously used that word in the construction of the obligation so that if he should yield to his weakness, which he anticipated, there would be a loop-hole for conscience and a technical advantage in the light of the law.

"The power of all things ceases; e'en sacred oaths  
At times be broke, and the determined mind  
Forego its steady purpose."

His fears were realized in a few days after he gave the bond, but he avoided *whisky!* His habit of remaining in bed much of the time during his periods of drunkenness gave the color of truth to the Surgeon's report, which carried him as "sick in quarters." After exhausting his supply of liquor in the field, he has been known to drink Alcohol, Perry Davis' Pain Killer, Extract of Ginger, and Mustard, as substitutes.

"Such the thirst, the insatiable thirst,  
By fond indulgence but inflamed the more."

He was dismissed the service for drunkenness, but the sentence was remitted in accordance with a time-honored custom in like cases. In the trial and conviction of an officer for this offense the court-martial simply performs a defined duty, and, in cases which do not involve crimi-

nal conduct, the members of the court attach an appeal for clemency to their proceedings. The reviewing authority goes through the form of confirming the findings and sentence, and, through respect for the petition of the court, remits the sentence, the ostensible reason for leniency being the stereotyped "In view of this officer's gallant and meritorious services in the field, I am pleased to remit the sentence," etc. As an evidence of the impunity of alcoholism in the Army, it is only necessary to state that this officer's social standing is above the average.

Viewed as a unit in regard to the use of stimulants, the Army comprises one vast festive fraternity. And are we not justified in the assertion that the Government sanctions and protects this vice,

when we refer to the case of an officer who was placed on the Retired List on account of the dislocation of his hip, which was caused by falling out of a buggy when he was intoxicated? If we examine the Retired List, and consider the cause of disability in many cases, we are led to infer that the Retiring Board construes "line of duty" as including the social acts of an officer.

Clannishness often renders it impossible to prove the most flagrant cases of drunkenness. At Fort Hays, Kansas, the troops, consisting of four companies and a band, were paraded at "Retreat," and a drunken officer staggered across the parade-ground to his company and fell flat on his face. The Post Commander, who was one of the many witnesses of the disgraceful scene, was asked

by a lady present, "General, did you see that officer fall?"

"Yes," replied the General; "but if I were to prefer the charge of drunkenness against him, I couldn't *prove* it!"

The following case fully warrants the General's assertion: A captain of his regiment was sent in pursuit of Indians who were depredating in northern Kansas. Instead of hunting for the redskins, he marched along the railroad near which his Post was situated, and always camped at a station, so that he could obtain the means to indulge his insatiable appetite for whisky. A Contract Surgeon for whom the Captain had conceived a bitter dislike, and whom he essayed to kill when in a fit of delirium tremens, was on duty with the company. In a second attempt upon the life of the

Surgeon the latter, assisted by the First Sergeant and several privates, threw the crazed officer to the ground and bound him securely with a rope. The next day the Surgeon released him and reported the facts to the General, who immediately preferred charges against the Captain for drunkenness on duty. The entire company were summoned as witnesses for the prosecution, and every one of them swore that he never saw the Captain intoxicated, nor even under the influence of liquor. The court-martial which tried the Captain, knowing that inebriation was his normal condition, set aside the testimony of the perjured witnesses and convicted the accused on the evidence *elicited* from the Surgeon, and then made the usual recommendation and petition

for mercy, which the reviewing authority duly respected.

When the officers set the example, is it remarkable that their men are given to drunkenness? It is a recognized and invariable custom of the majority of soldiers to give the meager pittance they receive from the Government to the Post Trader for intoxicants. Pay-day, which comes every two months, bears the same relation in a soldier's expectations that a feast-day does in a Mexican's. It is a time for revelry and gambling—a harvest for the Post Trader and the devil. The former prepares for it by increasing his clerical force, but the latter always seems to be ready for an exigence of business. For the two weeks succeeding this event, very little duty is expected of the men, as it requires about that length of time for the

Sutler to gather in all their money. While it lasts, fighting, desertion, murder, and all the offenses in the catalogue of crime are perpetrated. The guard-house is filled with men charged with the commission of deeds that will impose upon some the burden of a ball and chain and hard labor for a long period of years, and upon others the forfeiture of life. One would suppose that the disagreeable duties which this heathenish custom entails upon the officers would be sufficient to induce them to forego its privileges *themselves*, and endeavor to reclaim the Army from this demoralizing practice. To what extent they are propitiated by the Post Trader's furnishing them liquor, cigars and billiards without charge is difficult to determine, but certain it is that the liberality he shows to them and



their families is considered an equivalent for a compromise of honor that in civil life would be pronounced criminal.

A Sutler or Trader is allowed by law at every Military Post in the United States. Their chief business is to sell intoxicating liquors to the troops, and if they were debarred this privilege there would not be one in the Army. They get rich in a short time,—rich by destroying the bodies and souls of human beings,—and their occupation is dignified by the guarantee and protection of the Government! The warrant under which a Trader acts gives him the exclusive right to traffic on the reservation to which it relates.

It was once the writer's province, as member of a Council of Administration, to investigate the business of the Trader

of a two-company Post. Taking for the basis of calculation the measure of the small tumblers in which the Trader served spirituous liquors, for which quantity the soldier was charged twenty-five cents, it was ascertained that he received the enormous sum of seven hundred and fifty-six dollars for a forty-two gallon cask of whisky. His books showed that the aggregate sales of this kind of liquor alone for one year amounted to twenty-three barrels, making the gross receipts seventeen thousand three hundred and eighty-eight dollars. Allowing one hundred dollars per barrel for cost and freight, he realized fifteen thousand and eighty-eight dollars profit. His profits from the sales of other kinds of spirituous and malt liquors and wines for the same period amounted to three thousand dol-

lars, making a grand total profit of eighteen thousand and eighty-eight dollars from the sale of intoxicants for one year.

After the examination of his accounts was completed, a member of the Council remarked to the Trader that if it were not for the sale of liquor his business would not be very profitable. To which he replied, "I would not be here—it would not pay."

To confirm his declaration that it would not pay, it is only necessary to state that the Subsistence Department sells to the soldier tobacco, canned and dried fruits, preserves, canned vegetables, cheese, sardines, oysters, raisins, prunes, and many other articles not comprised in the rations, at *first cost*. The Trader cannot do this. He adds to the prime cost the transportation, which is very expensive on the

frontier, and sells at a gain. It necessarily follows that he must deal in something not supplied by the Army, and consequently his sole reliance is intoxicating beverages; and the Government authorizes him to sell them.

The foregoing exhibit shows that a Military Post Trader could well afford to pay the bonus assessed upon him for his position by the wife of a former Secretary of War. The perquisites from this source, however, have been cut off from the War Office by changing the mode of appointing Traders. The candidate now applies to a Post Council of Administration of the Post he desires. Upon their recommendation, approved by the Post Commander, the Secretary of War issues the necessary warrant, which guarantees to the Trader the exclusive privilege to

traffic on the military reserve to which he is appointed. It is due to this change that the General of the Army returned to Washington to live, being able, under the present system, to compete with the wives of Cabinet officers in number and quality of receptions and dinners: His salary of thirteen thousand five hundred dollars per annum was insufficient for this under the old régime.

The Tradership at Fort Union, New Mexico, is worth twenty-five thousand dollars a year, but it is no better than many others. Traders who have the necessary influence to procure the transfer of troops to their Post may increase their revenues.

Virtually, the Army is a school of dissipation; and it really seems as if the establishment were kept up chiefly for the benefit of the Post Traders.

Young men not inclined to intemperate habits before entering the service soon acquire them after joining. There are some who enlist through patriotic motives, expecting soldier life to be one grand gala day of bunting, bugles and "shoulder arms," but find the reality quite different from their ideal. They are compelled to associate with uncongenial people—their equals only when measured by a physical standard. They find themselves companions of *débauchés* of the lowest order, and are greeted on every side with prison slang and oaths. On pay-day, they see that drunkenness is almost universal—seemingly an obligation—and, unwilling to shirk anything that pertains to duty, they join in the common revelry with a vigor that soon begets the title of

“veteran.” Such is the force of example when it is constantly before a man’s eyes.

Very few Americans enlist, and most of those who do are mechanics who have become inveterate drunkards, and, unable to obtain employment at their trades, join the Army for support.

Sometimes, when troops take the field for a campaign, a Post Trader gets permission from the Commanding Officer to accompany the expedition with a supply of liquor, which is carried along in wagons adapted to the purpose. This privilege is solicited only when it is known that the soldiers will be paid in the field. A command once arrived at a point within forty miles of a Post, where it was met by a courier who bore a dispatch directing the Commander to await there the arrival of the Paymaster, who was then en route.

The man of money, accompanied by the Post Trader, who had the usual supply of whisky and other liquors with him, arrived in due time. No difficulty was experienced by the latter in obtaining permission to exchange his wares for the greenbacks. In two hours from the time payment began the men were fighting, raving and cursing, and it finally became necessary to tie several mutinous fellows to the company's wagons. That night three men deserted, making good their escape with their horses, arms and equipments. On the second day after the payment an officer asked the Commander when he intended to resume the march, and received the following reply:

“I shall remain here a few days to give the men time to have their spree out.”

Several days afterward the Trader



called on the Commanding Officer to present him with a box of choice cigars, and to inform him of his intention to depart the next day for the Post, when the old gentleman asked, "Have you got about all their money?" To which the Trader replied, "Yes, I think I have got the most of it; yesterday and to-day there was not much taken in, and I don't think what is still out is worth waiting for."

One of those hells on wheels accompanied a regiment of cavalry that was changing station, and during a march of five hundred miles nine soldiers and three citizens were murdered in drunken broils! What an ignominious death! Died like dogs,—unwept, unknelled and unsung,—and their bodies deposited in a shallow trench, to be fed upon by ravenous wolves! Slain in battle with savages,

and one's name spelt wrong in the newspaper reports, would be far preferable. Their burial-place should be marked by an imperishable monument, upon which should be emblazoned in glowing capitals the name of their commander and the cause of their death, to stand there as an everlasting reproach to the Government that authorizes the peddling of demoralization and death among its people!

When we hear of the death of a young officer on the frontier, caused by accident of drowning, horse falling, or by some other contingency of the march over mountains and through rivers, we know that maternal hopes are blasted and paternal pride turned to despondency; that grief is keenest when it is felt that the bright promise of a life that has been watched with increasing interest in its

development from infancy to manhood can never be fulfilled; but the parents' sorrow is assuaged somewhat by the thought that their son died in the performance of his duty—died in the interest of his country. Who so cruel, then, as to deprive them of their consolation when charity has hidden the true cause of death? Perchance he was intoxicated and attempted the passage of a deep, rapid stream, and fell from his horse when it charged the impetuous current; or recklessly urged the animal down a rocky steep and was precipitated into a yawning chasm.

Apropos: A young officer, stationed in the "far west," was sent to a neighboring fort on official business. He made the trip on horseback, and was so drunk when he arrived that he did not know

what he came for, and the officer in command ordered him to leave the Post. He started for the nearest town, which was seven miles distant, and in less than an hour his horse returned without its rider. A party was dispatched to search for the missing man, and after an hour's hunt they found him about three miles from the fort and a mile from the road, lying on the ground helplessly drunk and a pack of wolves barking at him.

It has frequently been necessary to detail soldiers to remain in the rooms with young officers who had *mania a potu*, to prevent their doing violence to themselves or others.

There is a class of officers who do not drink constantly, but have the most disgusting periodic debauches that ever disgraced the slums of iniquity. However

others may view them, *they* rate themselves *sans reproche*. One of them once preferred charges against a brother officer for *conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman*, and was soon afterward sent to a distant city to deposit public funds in a United States sub-treasury,—a detail much sought on the frontier, as it takes the officer into civilization. In less than three hours after performing this duty he was found, in full uniform, in a low brothel, dead drunk. His conduct was so offensive that the inmates of the den employed two hoodlums to take him to his hotel. He was carried through the public streets, followed by a crowd of idlers, one of whom carried his cap.

An old bachelor Captain, whose company formed a subdivision of a column en route to one of the Territories, was

also a toper of the above type. The troops having halted near a city for a few days, the Captain donned his best uniform, and, with cane and butter-colored kids, meandered the streets, staring at ladies and gazing into shop windows. He suddenly disappeared. Two days afterward the column left, but had not gone more than five miles when it was overtaken by a messenger with the information that the Captain had been found in the classic precincts of the city, nearly drowned in muddy water, in the gutter in front of a dance-house where might be heard the

“Midnight shout and revelry ”

of the demi-monde and lazaroni. As he was too drunk to sit upon a horse, an ambulance was sent back for him.

About a year previous to this episode in the Captain's career he spent a short leave in the city of Leavenworth. After making a round of formal calls upon the military people there, he felt that the time had come for him to lay aside the restraints of propriety and enjoy a little relaxation. Accordingly, he got drunk and fell from the sidewalk into the street, cutting his head on the curbstone. An officer of the Staff happened along and saw him, half buried in mud, struggling to regain the walk, and, actuated by motives of professional pride rather than feelings of friendly regard, he took the besotted Captain to the railway station and put him on a train with instructions to return to his Post. It required two days to make the journey—time enough to get sober and brush his clothes.

When he arrived, his garments still bore evidence of the debauch, but that was overlooked by his friends in their eagerness to ascertain how he received the cut on his head. In reply to their inquiries, he said :

“I would like to have some of the street-car drivers of the city of Leavenworth in my company ! I'd make it hot for them ! They have no regard for life or limb ! If you want to get on a car you must take a position beside the track when the car is half a block distant, as it is not stopped unless there are several to get off or on. When you arrive at the crossing where you wish to land, the driver brings the horses to a walk, but just when you are in the act of stepping down he whips up, and, if you are not expecting



such a movement, away you go upon your head. *That's the way I got that cut!*"

An officer who commanded a Post on the Pacific Slope, and who was addicted to intermitting inebriation, called upon a member of the garrison who was having a carousal in his quarters for the entertainment of some friends, among whom was the ex Indian Agent previously mentioned. After imbibing freely of several kinds of beverages, the Commander became very boisterous. The mixture aroused a belligerent spirit in him,—over which his wife had held a masterly sway until that moment,—and revived the fading memory of official troubles in which he was involved with the ex Agent when the latter was in charge of an Indian Reservation. These recollections having produced irrational excitement, he

seized a German-student lamp and attempted to wipe out old scores by applying it vigorously to the intrepid ex Agent, who, holding a glass of wine in one hand and guarding his head with the other, slowly retreated with face to the foe, singing a popular camp-meeting song, and manifesting supreme delight in all that was transpiring around him. Two strong men seized the warlike Captain, laid him on a couch, put a wet cloth on his head, and then sat on him till it was safe to let him go home.

The examples of intemperance in the Army, that have been mentioned, belong to the milder form. Thousands are daily transpiring so terrible in their depravity that to relate them would raise a question of veracity in the minds of those not familiar with the facts, and a doubt as to

the possibility of such excesses among enlightened people.

Will those who are responsible for the sale of intoxicating liquors on the military reservations claim that it is a measure of political economy? Can they face the indignation of nearly fifty millions of people, who, as a nation, boast of their civilization and progress, and satisfactorily account to them for tempting men to deeds of woe and death,—for adding insult to robbery and fraud,—for sending desolation and want in all forms of terror to the firesides of the families, parents or friends of those whose bodies and souls have been bartered to enrich Post Traders, who do not pay one dollar into the public treasury? Every American should blush for this lack of national dignity, and weep for the burn-

ing disgrace with which it stigmatizes his country. A mighty nation sowing the seeds of misery and death among its own people! By opportune action Congress might save, this very year, a thousand lives and years of want by prohibiting the sale of intoxicants at Military Posts. When this is done, sutlerships will not be sought, and the most fruitful source of dissolute habits and crime in the United States will be extirpated. Congress should do more than this. The sale of liquor to a soldier should be made a penal offense. The Government punishes citizens for purchasing a soldier's clothing, and why not punish them for selling to him anything that will impair his usefulness as a soldier? Surely, a sober man without clothes would be more serviceable than a drunken man

with clothes. The soldiers are the Nation's wards during the term of their enlistment, and should have the same moral guards and protection that a parent throws around his children. The Army should be a reformatory rather than a Bacchanal. Let those in power remember their accountability to society. They should be true to their manhood and to mankind—be faithful to their trust, and set an example of courage in the performance of their duty. Only in this way can they satisfy outraged humanity, violated law, and an offended God. We see the bitter consequences of impunity—they challenge the vengeance of Divinity. From the fact that temperance is a good thing, every means is justifiable by which the number of drunkards can be diminished. It behooves every parent, every

citizen, every man who loves his country, to do all in his power to overthrow the mother of iniquity—intemperance. Look at its appalling effects upon society everywhere! Lawlessness abounds on every side, and in the most terrible forms manifests its barbarous instincts. The scenes of blood daily enacted in every State send a thrill of horror through the land, and make a page in the Nation's record forever indelible. A people who do not avail themselves of every means for their own moral and physical preservation will, sooner or later, become imbecile and incapable of self-government.

There will have to be a change in our election system before the reforms which society demands can be fully attained. Under the present laws every man has a vote, without regard to his

character, his conduct, his utility and industry as a citizen, or the amount he contributes to the revenue of the State. The brothel keeper, who subsists on the wages of infamy, counts for just as much, politically, as the hard-working artisan who invents some admirable piece of mechanism by which labor quadruples its productiveness. The drunkard can neutralize the suffrage of the abstemious member of society who is taxed for the support of the drunkard's deserted children in an orphan asylum, and the man who picks your pocket to-day, and escapes detection, can walk up to the polls a week afterward and record his vote in favor, perhaps, of a much greater thief than himself.

The Government should be the chief mover in behalf of any measure that will promote the welfare of its people.

It should inaugurate the needed reform in the Army by prohibitory and compulsory laws. It has been said that the word "compulsory," as used in legislation for the general weal, might well be erased from American dictionaries; that it is alien to American ideas, hostile to the spirit that underlies our institutions. We do not concur in that opinion, for if there is a country on the face of this planet that needs compulsory laws, it is the United States; and it is highly probable that unlimited license has made more drunkards in the Army than a prohibitory law would have produced. A reasonable deduction from this proposition demands that our aristocracy be amenable to at least two rules of government—the first bounding their sphere of action, and the second holding them to a clearly defined account.

















